New: Official Annotated BBS List — Find One Close To Home! Page 50

BBS

THE BULLETIN BOARD SERVICES MAGAZINE

May 1995
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70992-35460

Netlaw: Encryption

World Wide Web

Shareware

Online Update

bbs.notebook

making your first connection

Quick primer gets you online

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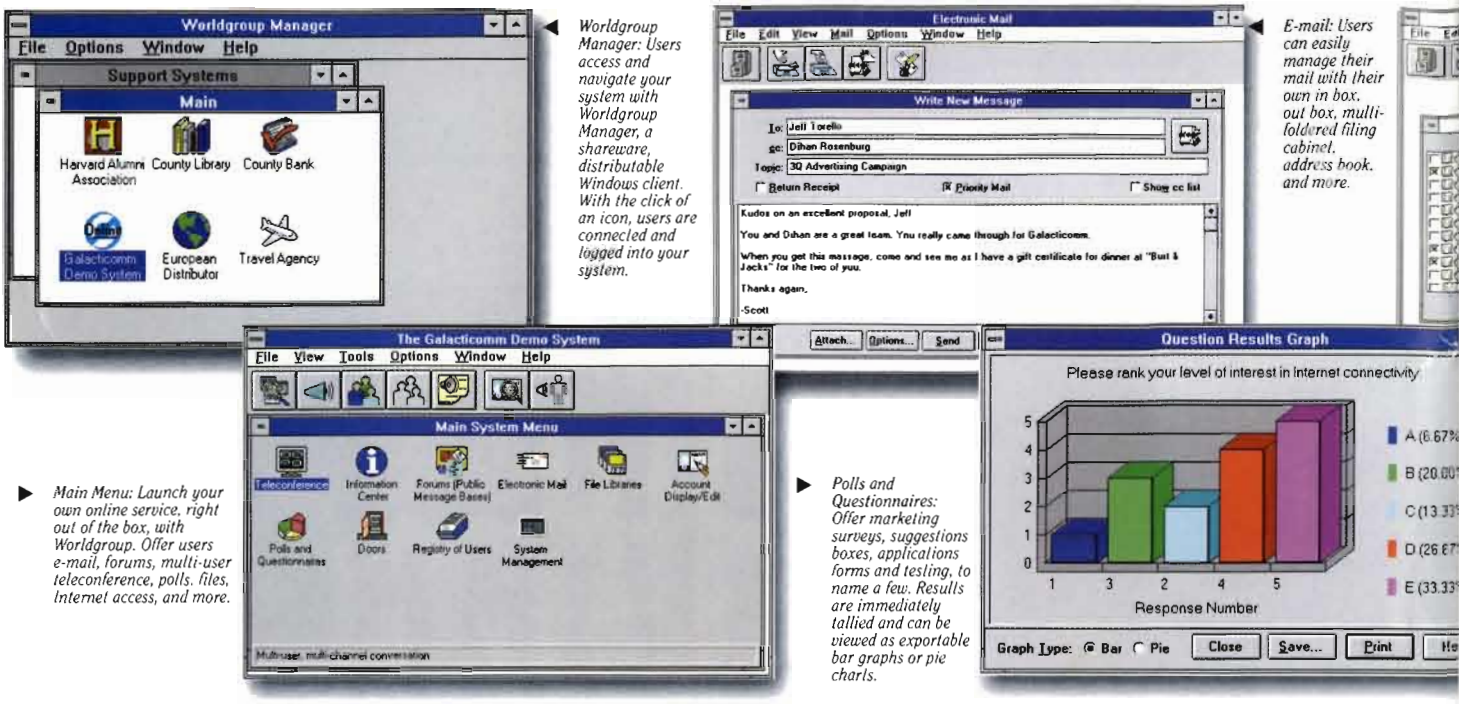


Worldgroup Manager: Users access and navigate your system with Worldgroup Manager, a shareware, distributable Windows client. With the click of an icon, users are connected and logged into your system.

E-mail: Users can easily manage their mail with their own in box, out box, multi-foldered filing cabinet, address book, and more.

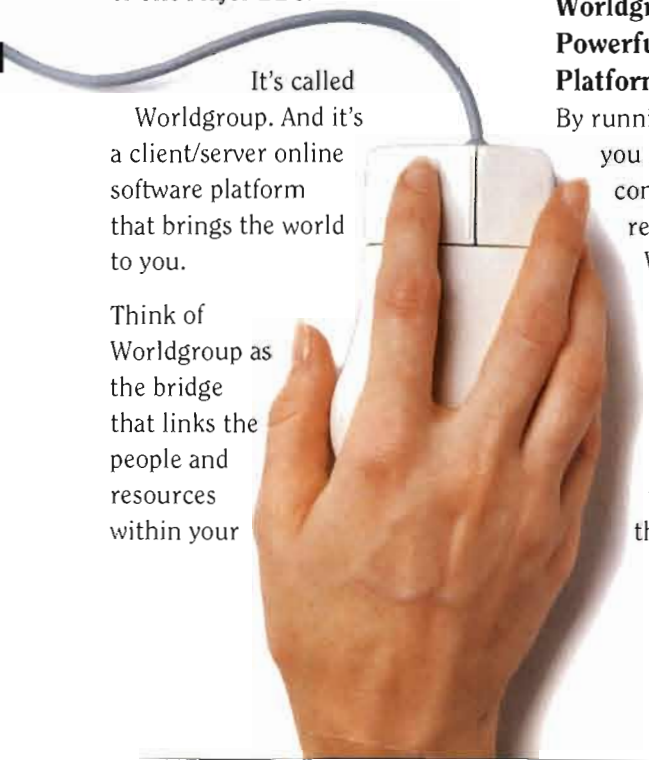
Main Menu: Launch your own online service, right out of the box, with Worldgroup. Offer users e-mail, forums, multi-user teleconference, polls, files, Internet access, and more.

Polls and Questionnaires: Offer marketing surveys, suggestions boxes, applications forms and testing, to name a few. Results are immediately tallied and can be viewed as exportable bar graphs or pie charts.

Open Your Windows To The

Worldgroup.™ Bring The World A Click Away.

The newest, smartest generation of online software isn't coming from Microsoft. Or CompuServe. Or America Online. It's coming from you—and Galacticomm, the creator of The Major BBS.®



It's called Worldgroup. And it's a client/server online software platform that brings the world to you.

Think of Worldgroup as the bridge that links the people and resources within your company to the world beyond. With the click of an icon, you can network your entire business world—customers, stockholders, prospects, field staff, distributors, vendors, the press, and more—together online!

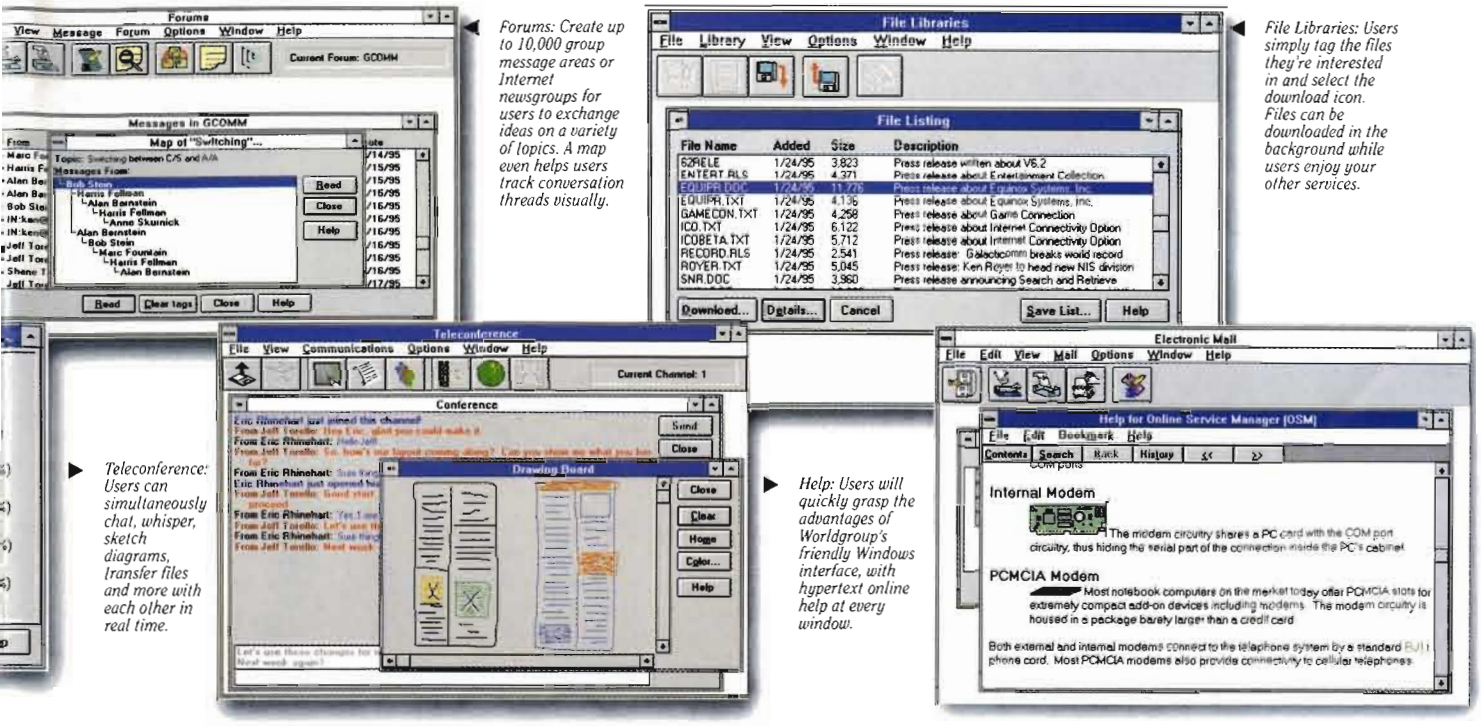
Worldgroup. The World's Most Powerful Client/Server Online Platform.

By running your own online service, you have 100% control over the content, presentation, and revenue of your system. And Worldgroup's client/server approach makes it easy for anyone to use.

The shareware client runs under Windows on your users' machines. Its multi-threaded architecture lets them do all sorts of cool things simultaneously. Like download files in the background, while reading new mail. Or auto update new versions of applications transparently. Local caching, "look ahead," and client-driven intelligence maximize performance at 2,400 or 28,800 bps.

You can customize all the icons and menu pages out of the box. Or, use our Visual Basic API to create your own client applications and add multimedia JPEG images, WAV sounds, and AVI movies. Better yet, just plug and play dozens of add-on applications from our network of Independent Software Vendors.

The server runs on a single 486 or Pentium DOS machine and can handle up to 256 users online at once. Locks and Keys™ security



Forums: Create up to 10,000 group message areas or Internet newsgroups for users to exchange ideas on a variety of topics. A map even helps users track conversation threads visually.

File Libraries: Users simply tag the files they're interested in and select the download icon. Files can be downloaded in the background while users enjoy your other services.

Teleconference: Users can simultaneously chat, whisper, sketch diagrams, transfer files and more with each other in real time.

Help: Users will quickly grasp the advantages of Worldgroup's friendly Windows interface, with hypertext online help at every window.

World Of Online Computing.

provides airtight access control. Full system accounting and reporting is built in. And in addition to client/server users, you can still support ASCII/ANSI/RIP terminals.

Worldgroup. Beyond the World-Wide Web.

Worldgroup's client/server interface works just as well over the Internet as it does with dial-up modems. We're talking full-fledged interactive applications, not just documents. In addition, ftp server and basic WWW server capabilities are also supported.

But it doesn't stop there. You can make your service accessible via modem, serial ports, TCP/IP, Novell LAN, ISDN, and X.25 networks such as CompuServe and SprintNet.

Worldgroup provides a communication model that brings the inside world and the outside world together in a secure, productive environment.

Worldgroup. The Best Of Both Worlds.

Worldgroup gives you the best of workgroup software and commercial online services. E-mail, group discussion areas, file libraries, teleconferencing, surveys, and more are all built in. You can gateway to existing message systems via MHS or UUCP. And that's just the beginning.

Worldgroup. A World Of Resources... A Phone Call Away.

As a Galacticomm customer, you'll also receive excellent documentation and world-class support. In every way, we will work with you to make your online venture a success.

So open your Windows to the powerful, smart new Worldgroup of online computing today. Call your Galacticomm dealer or call us at 800-328-1128 (or 305-583-5990 outside the U.S. and Canada). You can also send e-mail on the Internet to sales@gcomm.com and access our home page by pointing your favorite Web browser to http://www.gcomm.com.

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Online Interactive Software

GALACTICOMM
Bringing your vision online

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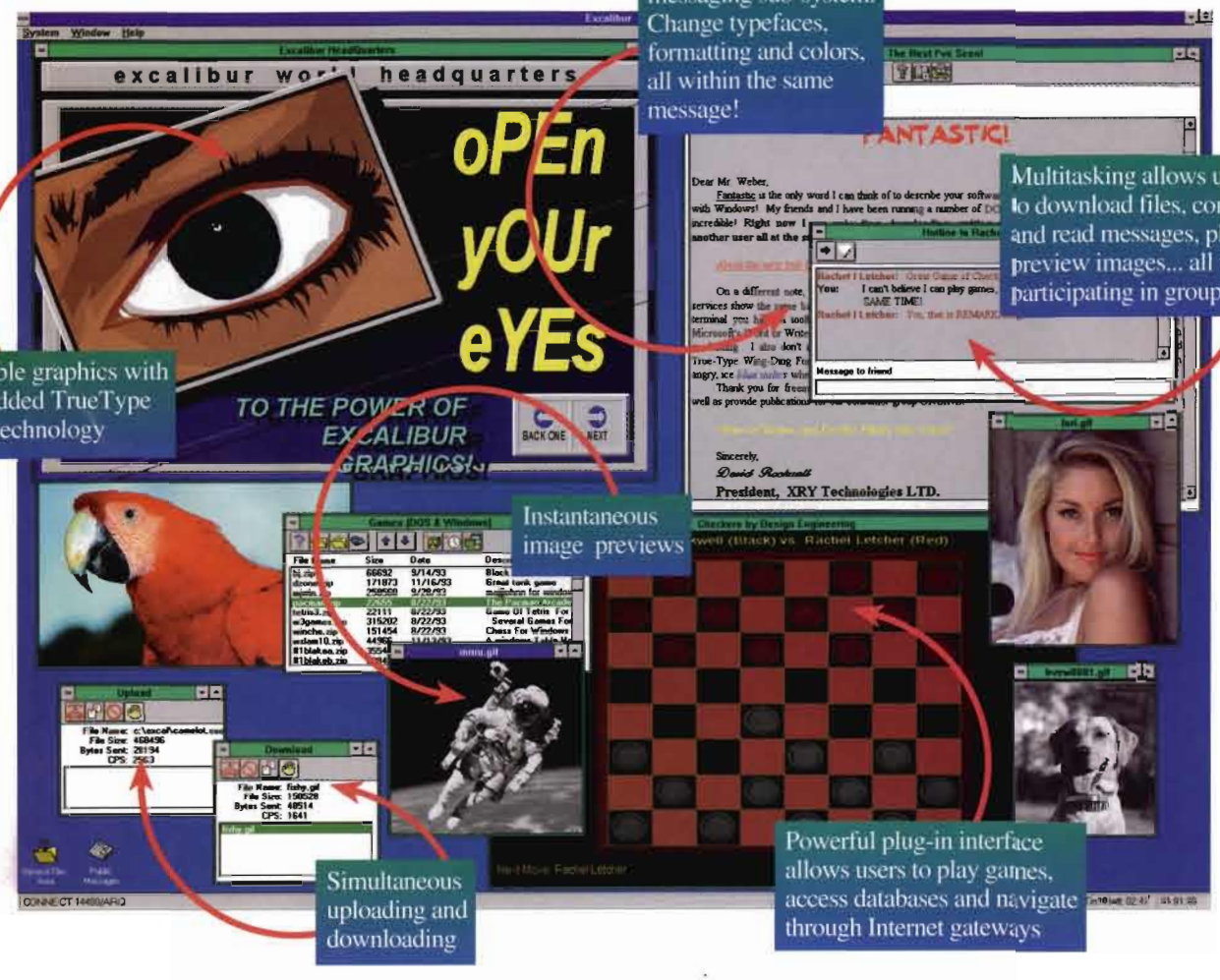
• WINDOWS 3.1, 3.11, NT & WINDOWS '95 • AUTOMATIC FILE RESUME • OFF-LINE E-MAIL CREATION • CALLER-ID CAPABLE • V.FAST 28.8K MODEM SUPPORT • CD-ROM SUPPORT •

• MULTI-USER CHAT • DRAG & DROP FILE MANAGEMENT • SIMULTANEOUS BI-DIRECTIONAL PROTOCOL • PROPRIETARY ERROR CORRECTION • TRUE PLUG 'N PLAY ABILITIES •


Online WYSIWYG messaging sub-system. Change typefaces, formatting and colors, all within the same message!
Multitasking allows users to download files, compose and read messages, plus preview images... all while participating in group chat.
Scalable graphics with embedded TrueType Font technology
Instantaneous image previews
Simultaneous uploading and downloading
Powerful plug-in interface allows users to play games, access databases and navigate through Internet gateways
oPEn yOUr eYEs
TO THE POWER OF EXCALIBUR GRAPHICS!
FANTASTIC!
President, XRY Technologies LTD.

Excalibur BBS

Excalibur is the bulletin board system taking the world by storm. It was the first system of its kind to run entirely under Windows™ and continues to set the standard of measure. Because Excalibur is built around an accelerated bi-directional protocol, users can upload and download files, chat with other users, and compose messages ... *all at the same time!* Utilizing our proprietary graphical interface, users are able to design their own menus and screens incorporating object oriented graphics, bitmapped graphics, and TrueType fonts. This means no two Excalibur based systems are the same! Advanced error correction and data compression offer reliability and convenience to all users, even those without error-correcting modems.

As for expandability, Excalibur offers true Plug'N Play abilities. Imagine doors that are both hassle free and easy to use. By using Excalibur's *Application Programming Interface* (API), third party developers have created everything from Internet gateways and databases to shopping malls and interactive games. The possibilities are endless. Modem into Excalibur HQ/USA at **918.496.8113** or call 800.EXCAL.BBS (800.392.2522). In Canada, modem into Excalibur HQ/Canada at 905.508.8872. Find out what users worldwide are heralding as "*the next generation in BBS software*".

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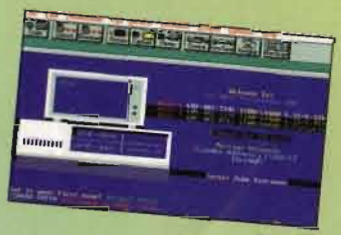

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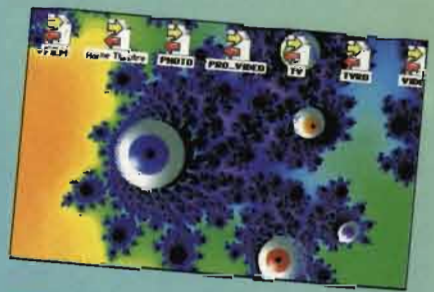

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Rusty **Edie**

Call a different kind of BBS. "We are the Friendliest BBS in the World." Our name says it all. Edie and I are a couple of burnouts from the 60s. We didn't like rules then and we don't now. Come on in and relax; you will be among friends. We have a huge adult section, including over three gigs of adult graphics, as well as a fine selection of public domain and shareware programs, including over a gig of family-type graphics. But that's not what sets us apart. When you call the first time, you'll know what no amount of words can tell you, you are Home. That's right, put up your feet and enjoy yourself.

We live by three no's: "No Censorship, No Rules, No Hassle."

You'll find us like no other BBS:

- We answer your messages and comments.
- We answer your on-line pages.
- We post our address.
- We post our voice phone number.

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HST only 216-726-1804
Compucom 216-726-3584
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All (V32 etc.) 216-726-2620
Fax 216-726-3595

readme.txt

Forays

My maiden connection to the future, back in the days of Reagan and 286s, was not exactly the engagement I was expecting. Where there was supposed to be a little flash of revelation — a peek through the digital horizon into tomorrow — there was "modem not found."

Less than boldly going where I'd never been, I did finally manage to feel my way around the basic (read: archaic) communications software and persuade the modem to dial, then connect, and finally talk to a local bulletin board. From start to finish it couldn't have taken more than, oh, a couple of days.

When you finish snickering you'll probably be feeling one of two things: empathy or pity. I encourage those among the former to take a look at our cover story this month. It's a no-nonsense guide to making that first connection — in under two days. The piece is written as a generic primer to communicating with the thousands (and growing fast) of BBSs sprouting and taking hold around the world.

You've taken the initial step toward that first connection by reading this far. Make the second by flipping to page 10.

AS THE WEB TURNS — The World Wide Web's exponential growth continues sending callers flocking to the various search engines in an effort to bring some sense to the wonderful chaos that is the Internet. These safe harbors offer the legions pointers to all corners of the Net, and incur a great deal of stress in the process. That stress is often passed on to the caller as he or she is informed there are "too many others performing searches at this time." The process can be maddening.

So we're doing our part to help out. Each month netizen Dave Kramer will be taking us on a tour of the Web, hitting some of the hottest and most useful sites out there. Dave's focus will vary widely as he reviews the best places to land and ones to steer clear of. Launch your browser and turn to page 16.

PS — Yes, BBS sysops can have petty battles over software and such, but they're not alone among the online cartographers. At Jupiter Communications' Consumer Online Service II conference in New York last February, a panel was assembled to discuss where online services were supposedly headed. From the get-go, an audience of a few thousand was treated to childish back-biting, sniping, gang-animosity and general virile disagreement that (to some people's surprise) stopped short of blows. So who were the panelists? Just the top dogs from AOL, CompuServe, Prodigy and Microsoft Network.

Rick Robinson
Editor
editor@bbsmagazine.com

Clark Development Presents...

The 1995 PCBoard / Online Communications Conference

Prospector Inn Resort, Park City, Utah
September 21 - 24, 1995

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Keynote Dinner
"The Future of Online Communications and PCBoard." Attendees will experience the next generation of online communications software from Clark Development - an exciting introduction to the future for sysops and users alike.

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Spend the morning and early afternoon learning from the experts. Scheduled sessions cover a broad range of topics, including connectivity with the Internet and X.25 networks, Fido, UUCP, QWK Mail, PCBMail, PCBFiler, Credit Accounting, Security, DOORs, System Configurations, Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced PPL Programming, plus business sessions on Marketing, Legal, Taxes and Accounting.

Friday & Saturday Afternoon and Evening & Sunday Morning
Session rooms will be open for vendor demonstrations, birds of a feather meetings, and one-on-one hands on training with each other and the programming and tech support teams from Clark Development. Or you can enjoy the many activities that the Park City area has to offer, including golfing, hiking, mountain bike riding, motorcycle/ATV riding, horseback riding, go for a hot air balloon ride or sled down the mountain on the Alpine Slide!

For more information or to register for the 1995 PCBoard / Online Communications Conference

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Finally! A west-coast trade show for the online industry and Clark Development will be there to show off the latest developments in PCBoard and online communications!

You'll meet the top suppliers in the industry, attend seminars, see the newest products, take advantage of show specials, and enjoy industry awards, receptions, hospitality suites and networking opportunities.

Join us in Las Vegas this June for the only major west coast trade show for sysops and the online industry.

NEWS

Wildcat! 4.1: OS/2 Support and More

BAKERSFIELD, CA — Hot on the paws of last year's 4.0 is the new Wildcat!, Mustang Software's mega-hit BBS package that now boasts enhanced OS/2 support, a multi-database file system and a full-screen ANSI-based file listing mode.

• The OS/2 update is the most significant addition to this Wildcat!, version 4.1, for it's been upgraded to support direct communications with OS/2's serial drivers for sysops running boards as a DOS process under OS/2. Additionally, 4.1 sysops can use intelligent multi-port serial cards from Digiboard, Inc. and other enhanced serial devices having OS/2 drivers in an OS/2 environment.

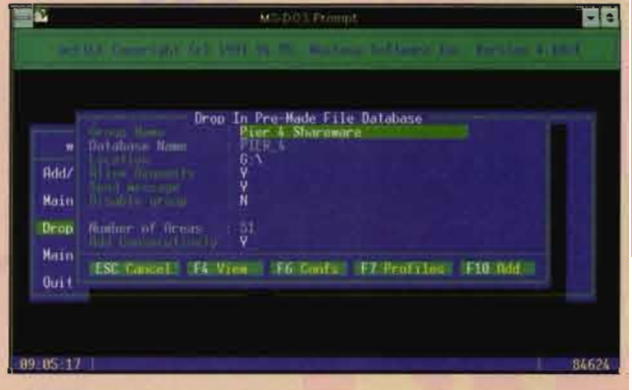
• A new feature in the CD-ROM department gives sysops the power to define groups of file areas on their boards. These so-called "file groups" can consist of any collection of file areas defined by the sysop, with each group having a separate database. Adding a new CD-ROM of downloadable files under 4.1 becomes simple as plopping in a pre-configured database.

Mustang's President Jim Harrer said in a media announcement that "we have created a system that gives the sysop many of the features of popular CD-ROM doors without sacrificing the speed and ease-of-use built into Wildcat!."

It's up to the caller to select the groups and then list, search and download files. As for the sysop, his job of processing requests for offline files is easier now because the task can be automated with the upgraded version of the wcFILE database utility (included).

• In full-screen file-listing mode (ANSI Lister) callers can browse the file bases using the arrow keys to mark files for download by just striking the spacebar.

According the Mustang, single-line, two-line and extended file listing modes are also available, with each caller getting to pick his or her favorite.



• Internet compatibility has been revised in 4.1, too. Callers can now send blank "subject" headings on the Net email conferences, satisfying a requirement of some email system routers.

Wildcat! 4.1 is available in five versions, from a $129 single-line version to the $999 BBS Suite. Wildcat! 4.0 owners can get the new version for $20.

For more information call 800.999.9619.

Automate Communication with Pipeline 2

SUNNYVALE, CA — Falco Data Products, Inc. has released PC to host communication software that offers OLE 2 automation support.

Acting as a universal communication hub for mixed platforms and operating systems, networks, modems, and

DataLinking BBS Callers

BUENA PARK, CA — Domain Entertainment has a nifty trick in store for sysops, but the real benefits are found on the other end of the line.

The company's recently released Domain DataLink permits BBS callers to link together through a virtual serial connection, relegating the board to catalyst status.

What this means for callers is modem games like DOOM, Heretic and Falcon 3 can be interactively enjoyed by callers on nearly any BBS.

Users can also perform direct caller-to-caller file transfers while online.

According to Domain Entertainment, "DataLink 'fools' your users' modems into thinking that they are connected directly together rather

WIRE

serial lines, Pipeline 2 lets users completely automate information gathering tasks.

"Falco's unique Pipeline 2 software improves workplace efficiency," said Rebecca Greening, Falco's vice president of sales, "by allowing users to simultaneously access up to 16 applications from a variety of host computers and easily move data between these applications."

By writing client programs in Visual Basic, Visual C++ (or any OLE 2 compatible language), users can create links from multi-user systems to PC applications — links that let participants share information immediately, compile information from several local or remote systems and replicate the data into any OLE 2 supported program.

Bottom line: Pipeline 2 promises users the ability to convert multi-step remote data retrieval efforts — or multi-host system access — into a single keystroke that can be automatically executed at a predetermined time.

Pipeline 2 retails for $395 and includes an assortment of network drivers and several forms of TCP/IP. Call 800.619.6789 for more information.

than through the BBS."

The result is just about anything that can be performed modem to modem can be done through DataLink.

The software can be run through multi-node BBSs including Synchronet, PCBoard, Wildcat!, and RBBS.

DataLink supports XTRN.DAT, DOOR.SYS, CHAIN.TXT, PCBOARD.SYS, DORINFO#.DEF, and SFDOORS.DAT dropfile types and has FOSSIL, BIOS, DigiBoard, and direct UART support.

DataLink is offered at $124.95 (Synchronet: $104.95).

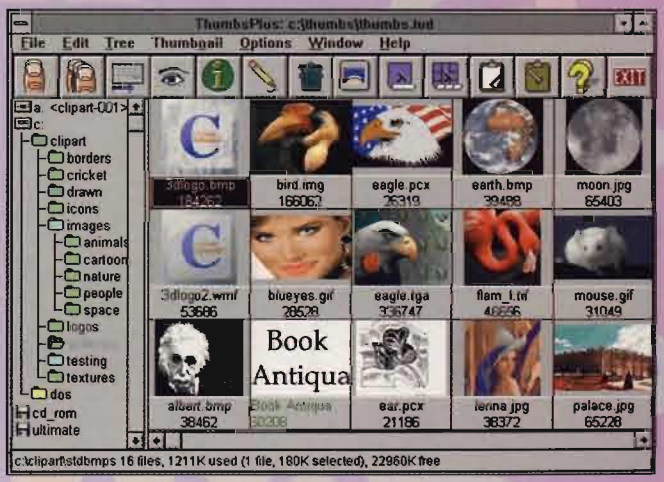
Call 714.739.0904 for more information. Support BBS: 714.521.9439.

Thumbs Up for Thumbs+Plus

CHARLOTTE, NC — Downloading a lot of images can make for a real headache when it comes time to locating particular photos. That's where Thumbs+Plus v2.0 comes in.

Formerly known as ThumbsUp, the Windows program from Cerious Software has a new name and slew of upgrades.

Once loaded, Thumbs+Plus turns your graphic files into a screen full of thumbnail images. To select the full view of a picture requires nothing more than a click of the mouse. Images can then be converted to other formats, color adjusted (contrast, gamma, brightness), enlarged, rotated and resized, inverted, flipped, or color-swapped.



Thumbs+Plus goes beyond the usual GIF/JPG/TIF viewing, and on to file formats unique to CorelDRAW, Windows sound, TrueType fonts, Kodak PhotoCD, Mandelbrot, GEM and plenty others.

Using Aldus Rev 1 graphic filters (which Thumbs+Plus automatically locates on the drive) users can also view Micrographx Designer/Draw files, Lotus 1-2-3 pictures, Mac PICT files and AutoCAD Plot and Exchange files.

Furthermore, using OLE, the program can thumbnail and view any file for which an OLE server is present on the system. These could include HP Graphics Language (HGL), Video for Windows (AVI), and Word for Windows (DOC).

Enhanced solid color metafile viewing, with eight-bit (256-color) drivers, eliminates the unsightly dithering Windows performs by default. And a "loss review" is provided for seeing any difference between an original and the compressed file when saving JPEGs.

For hard-copy cataloging, Thumbs+Plus also allows for the printing of thumbnail images (with captions and page notes, of course).

Shareware copies of the program can be downloaded from many BBSs, CompuServe, AOL, and from Cerious Software's FTP site: vnet.net. Or call 704.529.0200.

Registration is $50.

CONTINUES ...

ARGUS Update

DENVER, CO — Following its recent acquisition of Business and Technical Solutions, Inc. (developer of ARGUS, a RIPscrip terminal program for Mac, DOS and Windows), Hologlyph, Inc. has become the key provider of native Macintosh RIPscrip capable products.

A telecommunications firm known for its terminal emulations and telecomm applications for Mac, DOS, Unix, and Windows, Hologlyph has also announced its v1.3 update for current ARGUS users (for the cost of shipping).

The 1.3 update corrects bugs and includes a streamlining of the initial setup process.

For more information call 800.283.9082. Download a demo at 303.458.6653 (log on as "demos"; no password necessary).

Benefits of Mac in Windows

LAGUNA BEACH, CA — Mac envy. Plenty of Windows users experience it, but until recently (except for a few shareware attempts) there's been little they could do short of switching parties to Apple. Now Silver Wolf Productions has come up with a bridge called Silver Wolf Desktop (SWD) that "brings the folder/document metaphor to Windows."

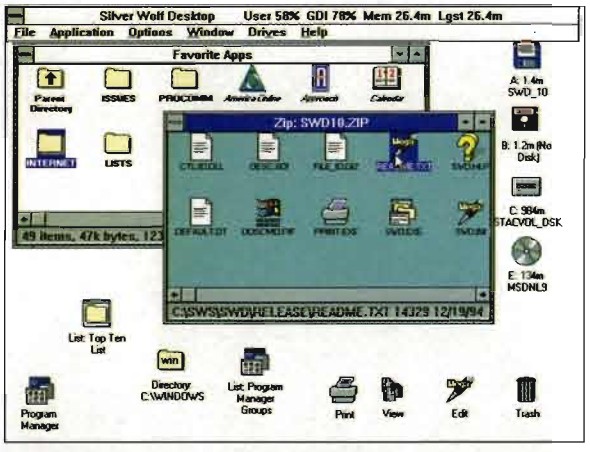
What that means is Windows users can now display directories as folder windows and files as document icons — something expected with next fall's (?) Windows 95.

The working environment of SWD's Windows consists of a menu bar at the top of the screen containing commands to manage your system, all available drives along the right edge as icons (including networks and CD-ROMs), configurable command icons along the bottom for commonly used applications, and disk directories as folder windows whose contents may be shown as icons, text, or lists.

"SWD can be run from Program Manager or File Manager directly, placed in Program Manager's startup group, in the WIN.INI 'run' or 'load' lines, or it can replace Program Manager as the Windows 3.1 shell," said Mark Daly, manager of product support at Silver Wolf, "giving the user complete control over how much change they want, and when."

SWD retails for $39 and can be found on CompuServe and other online services, including Silver Wolf's BBS at 714.376.9240. The file name is SWD10.ZIP.

For more information call 714.376.9220.



Novell's WebPerfect

PALM SPRINGS, CA — In the race to get hypertext markup language (HTML) development kits to the public in a simple, all-in-one package integrated into a familiar word processor, WordPerfect seems to be the somewhat unlikely front-runner.

Novell, Inc. announced in February the development of WordPerfect Internet Publisher for Windows, a free add-on to WordPerfect 6.1 that allows users to create and view documents on the World Wide Web without a lick of experience with HTML. Microsoft's tool, Internet Assistant, offers some but not all of these benefits.

The company is also planning WordPerfect Internet Pro for Windows, dubbing it an open solution that provides users with "seamless connectivity to the Internet from within WordPerfect 6.1."

"With a simple click of a button on the WordPerfect 6.1 toolbar, Internet users will be able to create, publish and view information anytime, anyplace," said Mark Calkins, general manager of Novell's Business Applications Division, in a somewhat oversimplified description.

The program provides a template that guides users through the process of creating an HTML document, and a conversion program automatically converts the WordPerfect document into a native HTML file.

Features like hypertext links, graphics and bullet lists are all available through the toolbar.

NetScape Navigator (a Web browser) is included with integrated WordPerfect and Envoy viewers, which lets users publish directly on the Web in native WordPerfect or Envoy formats.

The Internet Publisher Pro on CD-ROM provides everything in Internet Publisher plus dial-up Net access software from Novell's LAN Workplace product, and a trial subscription to any of several Internet service providers.

Internet Publisher Pro runs $49. Internet Publisher can be downloaded from BBSs and online services, or from the Web at http://www.novell.com/

For more information call 801.225.5000.

Wanted: PCBoard Sysops

SALT LAKE CITY, UT — In an effort to bring further support and promotion to PCBoard and its sysops, Clark Development Company has established Team PCBoard.

The "team" is being made up of volunteer PCBoard enthusiasts to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with other users and potential users.

"PCBoard sysops are proud of their choice for BBS software," said Steve Klingler, general manager of CDC, "and they are well known for their willingness to help others."

Klingler said the team provides an avenue for CDC to recognize sysops who have gone out of their way to help support the software.

To join the team, volunteers must log on to Salt Air BBS and type "TEAM" from the main board prompt. After filling out a questionnaire, logos and taglines are provided for download.

15.21 UPDATE — The latest version of PCBoard, 15.21, touts an integrated Fido mailer/tosser. The advancement provides a transparent front-end on PCBoard BBSs allowing for seamless Fido logins invisible to callers.

"PCBoard silently monitors the login process and passes control to the built-in Fido mailer if a Fido handshake is detected," said Klingler.

Additionally, the mailer allows PCBoard to support multiple networks so callers can participate in the official Fidonet as well as their private Fido technology networks. And the simultaneous multinode design allows the BBS to handle several Fido callers at once.

The tosser supports Fido and non-Fido specific echoes, Netmail, and provides for secure conference access.

IMAGinE Net BBS sysop Alfonse Vicente said the new system "is great because there is no need to have a complicated set of programs and batch files to have Fido technology networks in a PCBoard-based BBS."

And further, noted Vicente, due to the mailer/tosser being built in, PCBoard's import and export speed is extremely fast.

"With this new method of exporting and importing mail," he said, "it almost continuously permits nodes and hubs to have new mail ready to be sent to the networks."

Salt Air can be reached at 801.261.8976, 199.67.41.2 (telnet), or by selecting Salt Air from the BBS Direct menu of support boards.

USR, Cisco Combine Strengths

SKOKIE, IL — U.S. Robotics is on the move again.

USR and Cisco Systems are planning what the two have deemed a strategic marketing and technical relationship leading to the integration of Cisco's Internetwork Operating System (IOS) into platforms designed by U.S. Robotics.

According to USR the agreement marks the start of a long-term relationship covering technology development, integrated product development, OEM (original equipment manufacturer) manufacturing by USR and Cisco, and future reciprocal sales and marketing.

Specifically, the two companies plan to announce integrated products that will combine Cisco's remote access server technology with USRs' modem pool and Enterprise Network Hub platforms.

BBS Software & Hardware

This Month's Specials

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We Carry MajorBBS Add-on Modules	CALL
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QSO	$79
Interchange	$116
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DesqView386 Multi-tasking w/QEMM	Call
4 Port Serial Card, with 16550 UARTs	Call
Digiboard PC/8e, w/cable (use w/Wildcat! IM)	Call

BBS Technologies

209-498-0200

P.O. Box 4290 ◆ Fresno, CA 93744 ◆ Fax 209-237-0206

BBS Calling

What you need to know to

The following is presented as a quick primer to assist in making your first connection to a BBS. We'll assume you already know what a computer is and that you hold at least a vague idea of what it means to be connected to the network of local bulletin board services. We also assume you don't want to wade through details of BBSing's history, technical soliloquies on the ins and outs of online computing or lengthy dissertations on the social implications of a wired world. All agreed? Let's move on.

1-2-3: A Primer

make that first connection

1. From the Top

Quick update — Operating since the late '70s, bulletin board services have recently enjoyed an explosion of popularity and acceptance. Each day senior citizens, children and people of all ages in between share the same virtual meeting ground — a kind of mall without walls, parking problems or annoying salespeople — using their telephone lines and personal computers as a catalyst. They call bulletin board services to interact, to retrieve information and software, to play games with others calling in at the same time. Now it's your turn.

Starters — You'll need three things to get started: a computer, something called a modem and a little patience.

Let's assume you already have that first one. And if you bought it within the past year or so you more than likely already have the second — a modem.

Short for modulator-demodulator, the modem simply takes the language of the computer and translates it into a language that can be sent through your telephone line, then translates it back on the other end where the BBS's modem resides — in an office or, sometimes, the bedroom of the BBS operator.

Your modem might be a little black box (looking something like an automobile radar detector) or it could be built into the computer. If you don't see the box, check the back of your computer for something resembling the telephone jack in your house (refer to the booklets that came with the computer for help). Once you find it, simply plug a telephone cord into the assigned opening and attach the other end to the wall jack. Now you're almost ready.

Software — Your computer can't "speak" directly to a BBS without another kind of translator. This one is called a communications or terminal program. There are plenty of them available from BBSs, but we haven't gotten there yet so you'll need to go back to the documentation that came with your computer, find the booklet referring to your modem and see if it discusses anything about a communications program (many modems come packaged with this software). Once you find it, follow the instructions for opening the program. This will bring us the next step: setup.

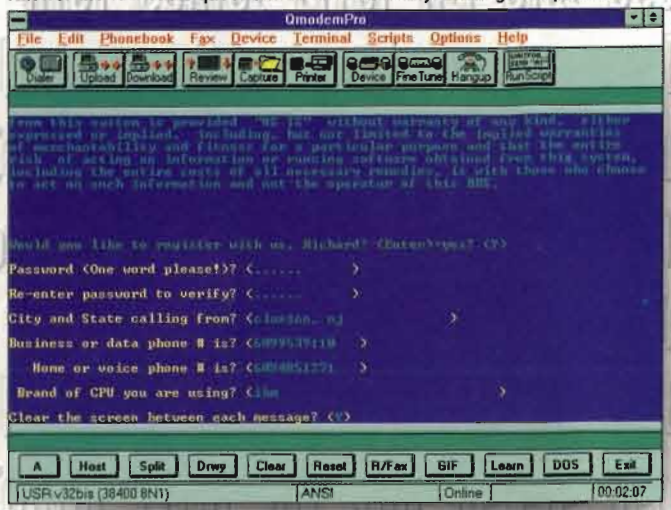
CONTINUES...

Open the terminal or communications program and enter the BBS number.

Connected! Enter a name and the BBS will recognize you as a new caller.

QmodemPro
File Edit Phonebook Fax Device Terminal Scripts Options Help
Welcome To:
Sysop: John Carcione
What is your first name? Richard Smith
(R) to re-enter your name or (C) to continue logon as a new user? (C)
A Host Split Drwy Clear Reset R/Fax GIF Learn DOS Exit
USR v32bis (38400 8N1) ANSI Online 00:00:38

Answer the few basic questions so the BBS and you can get acquainted.


QmodemPro
File Edit Phonebook Fax Device Terminal Scripts Options Help
Would you like to register with us, Richard? (Enter)=yes? (Y)
Password (One word please!)? (
Re-enter password to verify? (
City and State calling from? (
Business or data phone # is? (
Home or voice phone # is? (
Brand of CPU you are using? (
Clear the screen between each message? (Y)
A Host Split Drwy Clear Reset R/Fax GIF Learn DOS Exit
USR v32bis (38400 8N1) ANSI Online 00:02:07

Wait! I can't find it! — Before we get to setting things up, it's possible some of you might not have found the program. If this is the case, give a call to Mustang Software (800-999-9619) and request a free evaluation copy of their communications program called Qmodem. Mark your spot and get back to us when you receive it.

The Windows Link — If you have Microsoft Windows running on your computer, on the other hand, you can get started right away (see page 14).

To do this open the Accessories group and click on Terminal. Now we're ready.

Go to Settings on the menu across the top and select Communications. Other communications software will have similar "settings" to fill out. The first thing so select is the appropriate "baud rate" (different from BPS, or bits per second — but often confused — baud loosely refers to the rate of speed information can travel between your modem and the BBS). Check the modem's booklet to find your modem's baud rate, then click the corresponding circle.

For brevity's sake, we'll take a chance and just select eight "data bits," "no parity," set "flow control" to Xon/Xoff and choose one "stop bit." These are common settings and will likely work for you.

Now comes the "Connector," or communications port. Again, it's probably safe to choose COM2. Click OK. If the correct port is selected (using Windows), the window will disappear taking you back to the Terminal. If this is incorrect, Windows will tell you, in which case you should try COM1.

T Minus 5...4... — Finally, it's time to make a call. First thing you'll need is a telephone number for a local BBS. If you don't have one in mind, check the annotated list in the back of the magazine for one in a town near you. Or try one of the BBS software manufacturer's support BBS numbers listed at the end of this primer.

Once you have the number, select Setting and then Phone Number and enter the number. A similar procedure is provided in most communications software, including Qmodem.

Now select Dial or OK. Depending on your setup, the modem might be respond with a dialing sound, or it might be silent. If your modem is an external device, the lights across its front should also be reacting.

Now your address and personal details.

QmodemPro
File Edit Phonebook Fax Device Terminal Scripts Options Help
(A) Ascii (Non-Binary)
(X) Xmodem (Checksum)
(C) Xmodem-CRC
(O) 1K-Xmodem
(F) 1K-Xmodem/G
(Y) Ymodem (Batch U/L and D/L)
(G) Ymodem/G (Batch U/L and D/L)
(Z) Zmodem (Batch U/L and D/L)
(H) HS/Link (bidirectional batch)
=> (N) None
Default Protocol Desired (Enter)=no change? (N)
Default Protocol set to Zmodem (Batch U/L and D/L)
Please wait - Adding RICHARD SMITH to Quick Index File ...
What is your full name?
Enter only address - NO City or State yet!
What is your address?
A Host Split Drwy Clear Reset R/Fax GIF Learn DOS Exit
USR v32bis (38400 8N1) ANSI Online 00:02:56

Welcome, you're now a free caller — this means you have somewhat limited access and time online.

QmodemPro
File Edit Phonebook Fax Device Terminal Scripts Options Help
Hello Richard
Your Security Level is 10
You last called The Next Generation BBS on 02-27-95 at 09:29
Thanks for calling Richard and enjoy your visit today!
Scan Message Base Since 'Last Read' (Enter)=yes?
Messages In You
Messages Found
Main Board
Press (Enter) to continue?
A Host Split Drwy Clear Reset R/Fax GIF Learn DOS Exit
USR v32bis (38400 8N1) ANSI Online 00:04:24

The Main Menu (Control Center) shows what the BBS has to offer.

Selecting "F" shows "Files Available On The Board." Select a category.

QmodemPro
File Edit Phonebook Fax Device Terminal Scripts Options Help
Files Available On The Main Board
Communication Programs & Utils.
All Games And Fun Files
Windows Related Files
General Utility Files
Word Processing Files
Gifs and Gif Viewers
Printers/Utilities And Fonts
Star Trek Related Files
Miscellaneous Files
Text and Docs Files
Recent Uploads
All Files Available On The Main Board - Created Daily
All Adult Files Available In Conference 52 - Created Daily
All Files Available In Conference 1
(H)elp, (1-11), File List Command?
A Host Split Drwy Clear Reset R/Fax GIF Learn DOS Exit
USR v32bis (38400 8N1)
ANSI
Online
00:05:10

2. The First Connection

When the dust settles, you should be getting some kind of welcoming message transmitted to your monitor from the BBS: "Hello and welcome to John Smith's BBS." If so, congratulation are in order — you made your first connection.

Now that you're online, you will need to introduce yourself and answer a few questions.

The first thing you'll likely be asked for is your name and password. Since this is your first time, you obviously don't have a password to offer, so follow the basic instructions the BBS provides for "New Users".

Mine is Different Than Yours — Remember, there are many different brands of BBS software, and each acts a little differently. However, the basics are pretty similar in that they'll require your full name, address, telephone number, requested password and comments.

Don't be too concerned about giving these out. BBS operators (or sysops) likely won't be calling to solicit or bother you. Quite the contrary — they want to get you on board and keep you there, not scare you away.

The BBS will also ask for some technical information about your computer and terminal settings. But don't worry, a good BBS will offer the most common "default" settings — select them.

After you complete the questionnaire, you'll probably be brought up to date on the latest goings-on at the bulletin board. Other information will appear on the screen about the rules of the BBS, costs (if any) and limitations. You'll probably be anxious to move on, but take a moment to read whatever is put before you — it could be important.

Following the messages, you'll most likely be sent to the Main Board or Main Menu. This is the directory from which you can travel to all corners of the BBS.

Here you might find options such as Download a File, Locate a File by Name, Bulletin Listings, Chat With Others, Join a Conference, etc. Again, each BBS might look a little different, so our instructions might not ring true on all BBSs. In these cases, it's best to just feel your way and experiment.

Getting the Goods — Once you've found something of interest, like File Directory, try entering the letter(s) appearing in upper case before File

CONTINUES...

We've chosen "11," giving us a list of files in that category.

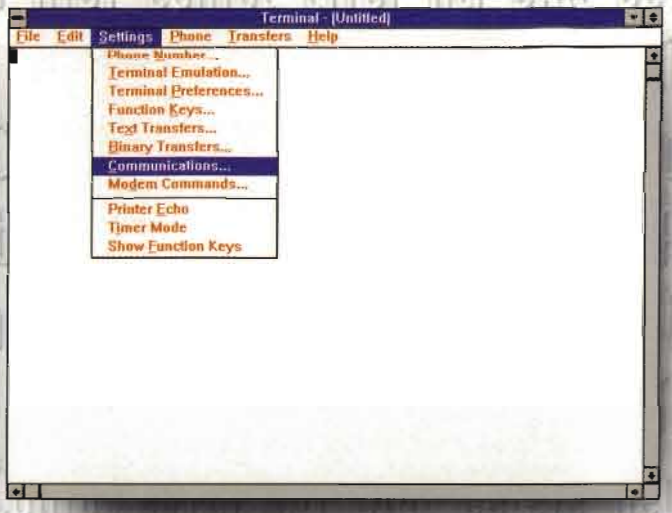
QmodemPro
File Edit Phonebook Fax Device Terminal Scripts Options Help
(H)elp, (1-11), File List Command? 11
ALL NEW UPLOADS
=== The Following Files Are Free Downloads ===
MEMBER.ZIP Membership Info For Joining The Next Generation BBS In Zip Format.
MEMBER.TXT Membership Info For Joining The Next Generation BBS.
NEXTGEN.ZIP List Of All Files Available On The Main Board In Zip Format. Updated Everyday.
ADFILES.ZIP List Of All Adult Files Available In Conference 52 (9BB+ Megs) Updated Everyday.
HOMFILES.ZIP List Of All Files Available In Conference 1.
TREK45.ZIP Ver 4.5 Of Trek Trivia Online.. Great Door For Trek Fans. Allows To Select From The Original Series, TNG Trivia, Or DS9. Multi/Mode, Multi/BBS Door That Runs At Any Baud And On Almost Any BBS Software.. Try It, You'll LOVE It!
BBSCDFRM.ZIP Order A Classified Ad In BBS Callers Digest Using This Order Form. A Must If You Want To Sell Some Used Equipment Or Market A New Product. Get It Now And Send It In Quick.
(20 min left), (H)elp, (D)iew, (F)lag, More? d
A Host Split Drwy Clear Reset R/Fax GIF Learn DOS Exit
USR v32bis (38400 8N1)
ANSI
Online
00:10:19

Type "D" for download, enter the name of the file and hit Enter.

QmodemPro
File Edit Phonebook Fax Device Terminal Scripts Options Help
=== The Following Files Are Free Downloads ===
MEMBER.ZIP Membership Info For Joining The Next Generation BBS In Zip Format.
MEMBER.TXT Membership Info For Joining The Next Generation BBS.
NEXTGEN.ZIP List Of All Files Available On The Main Board In Zip Format. Updated Everyday.
ADFILES.ZIP List Of All Adult Files Available In Conference 52 (9BB+ Megs) Updated Everyday.
HOMFILES.ZIP List Of All Files Available In Conference 1.
TREK45.ZIP Ver 4.5 Of Trek Trivia Online.. Great Door For Trek Fans. Allows To Select From The Original Series, TNG Trivia, Or DS9. Multi/Mode, Multi/BBS Door That Runs At Any Baud And On Almost Any BBS Software.. Try It, You'll LOVE It!
BBSCDFRM.ZIP Order A Classified Ad In BBS Callers Digest Using This Order Form. A Must If You Want To Sell Some Used Equipment Or Market A New Product. Get It Now And Send It In Quick.
(H)elp, (1-11), File List Command? d
(1) Enter the filename to Download (Enter)=none? member.zip
Checking file transfer request. Please wait, Richard ...
(1) MEMBER.ZIP 1203 bytes, 0.3 minutes (approximate) FREE / NO TIME
(2) Enter the filename to Download (Enter)=none?
A Host Split Drwy Clear Reset R/Fax GIF Learn DOS Exit
USR v32bis (38400 8N1)
ANSI
Online
00:10:55

Download is under way!

Choose Communications.



Directory in the Main Menu. In this case it's "F".

You should now be looking at another menu, one that lists categories of files that may or may not be available to you (depending on the BBS, callers are given little, moderate or complete access on the first call; you might be asked to become a paying member—maybe $20 to $100 per year—in order to retrieve files and access some of the premium services of the BBS).

Try choosing a category of files that sounds inviting. Doing so will bring up a list of files held within that category, with the name of the file at the left and the description to the right. Keep striking the Enter key until you find something that catches your eye. Now type an "n" and Enter (or the required command on the BBS that ceases listing of files—try typing "?" for a list of those commands). Now we're ready to download (copy the file onto your computer).

Downloading—Typing a "d" should present you with an inquiry about the name of the file. Enter the name exactly as it appears on the list and hit Enter. If you're asked for another file name, just hit Enter again. Follow any other instructions the BBS sends and you'll soon see the bulletin board take over (it also might ask for something called a protocol, in which case "Zmodem" should do fine; if not, try Xmodem or Ymodem—Windows Terminal users should choose Binary Transfers from the Settings menu option and then click on Xmodem).

The BBS will let you know your download is taking place, including how much time the transfer will take, the speed of the transfer, etc. Don't be concerned with these now.

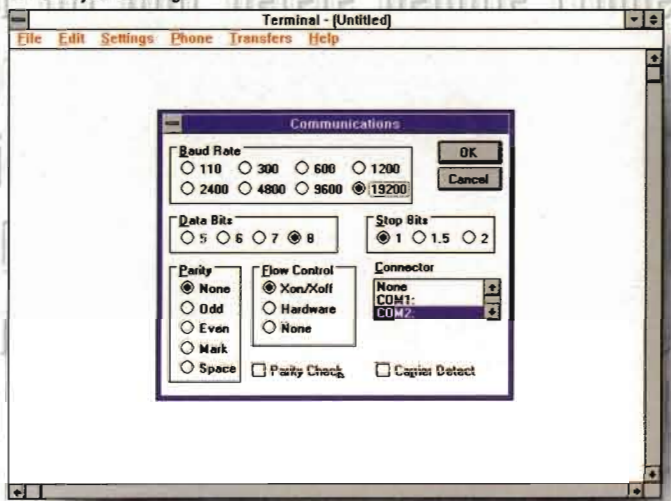
When the download is completed, you'll be dropped back into the File List to start again.

But What If?—Remember, anytime you find yourself at an impasse, try entering the "?" for instructions.

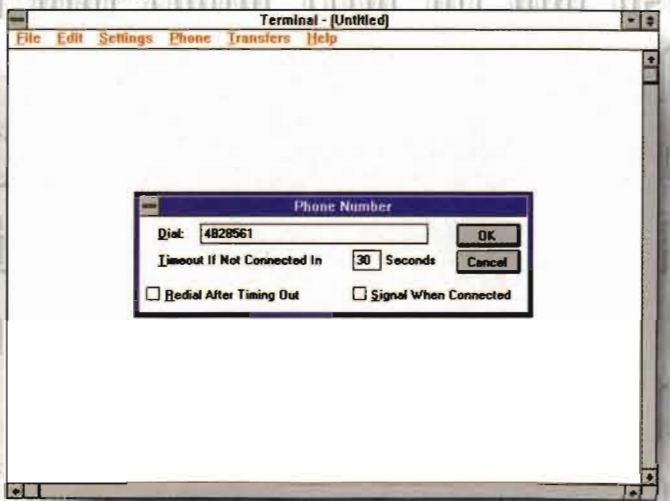
But to avoid the impasse altogether, the best thing to do is spend as much time as you can looking around the BBS and getting a feel for the terrain. You can't "break" anything so don't worry too much about typing the wrong thing. If the BBS doesn't understand a command it will instantly let you know.

And if all else fails, try asking the sysop for help. From the Main Menu there should be a listing with the word "sysop" in it. Sometimes all you have to do is type "c" to leave a message for the system operator. But whatever the procedure, leaving a message is usually a good way to get expert feedback. In

Choose your settings.



Enter BBS number.



fact, it's a good idea to leave a message even if you don't need help. Just tell the sysop you're a newcomer and you appreciate his/her letting you look around.

If you're in a real bind and need help right away, try typing "o" for operator page — or the corresponding command from the Main Menu. This will send a signal to the sysop alerting him of a caller with a problem. If the sysop is near the BBS, response will usually be immediate. But don't take it personally if you get no response — sysops are often busy people. Leave a message instead.

Onward and Upward — Now that you're able to look around the BBS, branch out (from the Main Menu) and try things like Chat (typing in "real-time" to other callers), Messaging (leaving messages and responding to other callers), Doors (ancillary programs BBSs run to allow callers to play games with others on the BBS), Bulletins (information about the BBS), and News (the latest additions to the BBS).

Sharewhat? — Before we move on, it's probably a good idea to mention something known "shareware." Much of what you'll be downloading from BBSs will be considered shareware. These range from full-motion games to practical applications like an electronic ledger. Created by independent developers and commercial software companies, shareware is simply software you are free to try before you buy.

If you plan to keep it, send the author the requested fee (usually quite moderate) and in return you'll get support, updates and sometimes a more complete version of the program.

Similar to shareware is "freeware." This is software sent out to bulletin boards for callers to use at will, as long as they don't modify and resell it.

3. Who to Call

We suggested before that you take a look at our list in the back of the magazine for BBS numbers in your area. But suppose you're interested in comparing how the different bulletin board software programs "act," or maybe someone suggested a particular BBS package as more caller-friendly than the others — some BBSs offer graphical "point-and-click" menus using something called RIP, while others take advantage of the look and feel of Windows.

Whatever the reason, the following is a sampling of support BBSs put online by the companies that produce them. Try them all and good luck — you're now a BBSer.

Excalibur BBS: 918.496.8113
This is a graphical, mouse-driven Windows BBS that will require you to download the terminal program.

PCBoard: 801.261.8976
Clark Development Company's support BBS.

PowerBBS: 516.822.7396
Power Computing's Windows BBS. Again, you'll want to download the special terminal program to get the full affect.

PowerBoard BBS: 914.833.1479
NUIQ Software's support BBS.

RemoteAccess: 913.441.0595
Support BBS for Wantree's Remote Access BBS.

Searchlight BBS: 216.631.9285
Searchlight Software's support BBS.

SpitFire BBS: 515.225.8496
Buffalo Creek Software's support BBS.

Synchronet: 714.529.5313
Digital Dynamics' support BBS.

TBBS: 303.699.8222
eSoft Inc's support BBS.

The Major BBS: 305.583.7808
Galacticomm, Inc's support BBS. A Windows terminal can be downloaded for access to its Windows BBS called Worldgroup.

TinyHost: 716.924.4193
Bruce Krobusek's TinyHost support BBS.

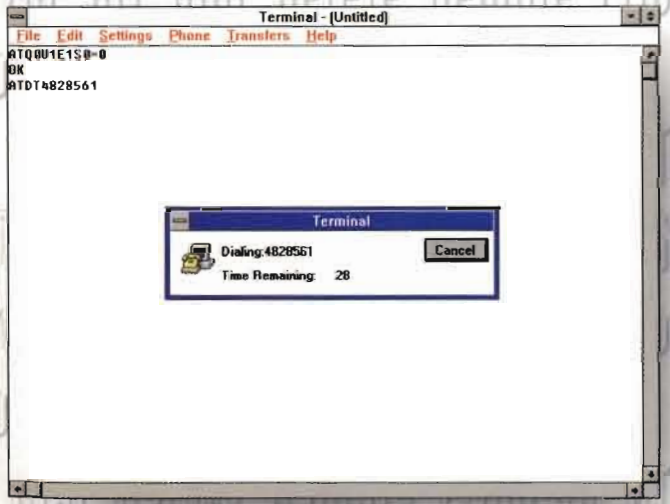
TriBBS: 207.941.0805
TriSoft's support BBS.

Virtual BBS: 616.399.4818
Virtual Technologies' support BBS.

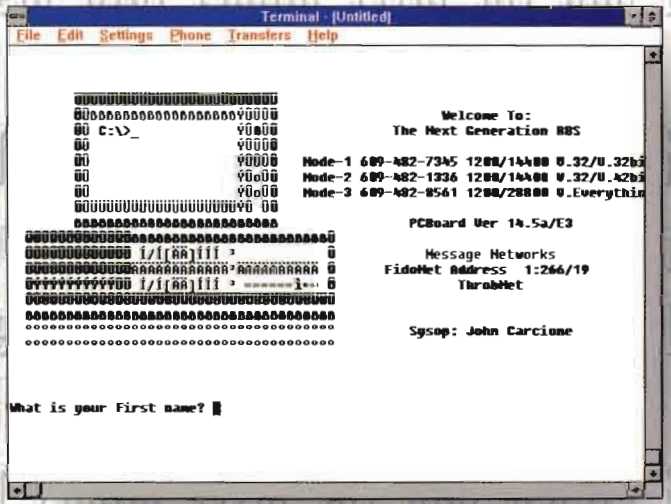
Wildcat!: 805.873.2400
Mustang Software Inc's support BBS. Home of Qmodem.

WWIV: 210.631.5841
WWIV Software Services' support BBS.

Terminal connects.



Enter your name.



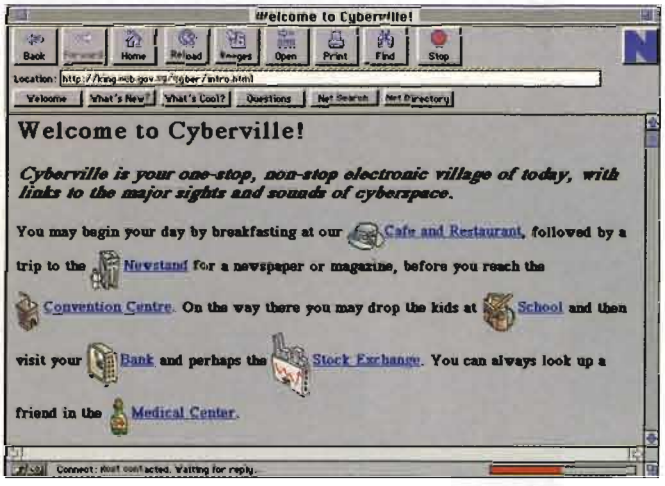
The Net on 50 Cents a Day

By Dave Kramer

Traveling on the Internet's World Wide Web, in case you hadn't noticed, is very much a virtual experience. When you click on a Web hyperlink to a site in Paris, for instance, you don't touch down at Orly in a supersonic jet. Nor do you feel the rush of data crossing a transatlantic trunk line as you connect your mind and being to the Conservatoire National des Arts et Metiers (http://www.cnam.fr/).

Yes, the Internet is a form of global village, but you can leave behind your passport and visa. There are no borders to cross. Rather, using the Web is full of mundane fetching and loading of text and images. So it's refreshing when you stumble across a site that brings home the fact that you're plugged into a transcontinental network full of odd bits of culture.

Cyberville, located at http://king.ncb.gov.sg/cyber/intro.html, is such a place. Set in saucy Singapore, the site makes an honest attempt to fit the galaxy of the Web into a real-world frame. There's shopping at the mall, a newsstand to peruse for the morning paper, and next door is a cafe at which to grab a cup of joe. There's also a medical center, an arcade, a library, a convention center, bank and stock market for the pin-stripe types, and a movie theater and museum for evening and weekend entertainment.


Welcome to Cyberville!
Back
Forward
Home
Reload
Images
Open
Print
Find
Stop
Location: http://king.ncb.gov.sg/cyber/intro.html
Welcome
What's New!
What's Cool?
Questions
Net Search
Net Directory
Welcome to Cyberville!
Cyberville is your one-stop, non-stop electronic village of today, with links to the major sights and sounds of cyberspace.
You may begin your day by breakfasting at our Cafe and Restaurant, followed by a trip to the Newsstand for a newspaper or magazine, before you reach the Convention Centre. On the way there you may drop the kids at School and then visit your Bank and perhaps the Stock Exchange. You can always look up a friend in the Medical Center.
Connect: Host contacted. Waiting for reply.

Yeah, you might say that Cyberville takes the "global village" metaphor just a little too seriously. Still, there are worse ways to catalog the Web, and the site uses tiny images to illustrate it, a point that cannot be made too heavy handedly in these dripping-with-GIF days.

The major downside I found was the number of links that were broken. The problem with the Web is that it is still a wholly volunteer effort (for the most part), and volunteers don't tend to spend every minute of every day policing their sites for broken or malfunctioning links.

That's why I was pleasantly surprised by the approach of Robert Forsman Jr., a researcher at the Center for Computer Vision & Visualization in Gainesville, FL. Forsman maintains the Games & Recreation "shelf" of the WWW Virtual Library —a distributed index with branches in Finland, France, and the United Kingdom (among others), seamlessly connected into one really massive collection of hyperlinks. One of the things that Forsman does is place small GIFs next to links that are temporarily down ("Pavement Ends") or seemingly down for good ("Road Out"). His site is at http://www.cis.ufl.edu:80/~thoth/library/recreation.html.

KEYWORDS

Hot stops around the world

Vegetarian delights

Continuing our whirl around the globe, I find it ironic that one of the best Web pages dealing with gay Paris is in Southern California (http://meteora.ucsd.edu:80/~norman/paris/). But then, this is just another example of the distributed nature of the Net. Anyone considering a trip to the City of Lights will be happy to find information here about museums, maps of the metro, sights, you name it. And many of the links do take you into international waters.

If jolly old England is more your thing, your guide to London is only a click away, at http://web.cs.city.ac.uk/london/guide.html. A clearinghouse on

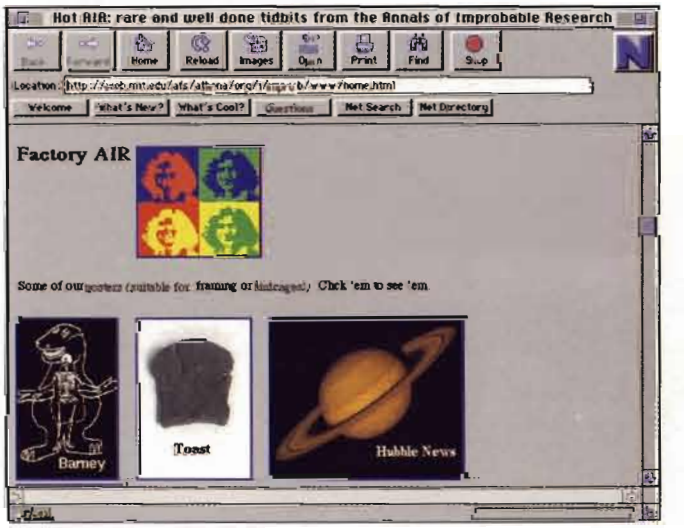
Japan is at http://www.ntt.jp/SQUARE/www-in-JP.html. And be ready to install that Cyrillic font, because the Window to Russia site (http://www.kiae.su/www/wtr/) has an interactive English to Russian dictionary, as well as links to the wonderful St. Petersburg Web (http://www.spb.su/).

Coming back in a little closer to the US, the Great White North of Canada has some tasty treats. A travelogue of beautiful Vancouver can be found at http://www.Direct.CA:80/Village/, and a number of links to world government sites hooking up across the globe are available at http://debra.dgbt.doc.ca/opengov/world.html. Go to the bottom of the page and click "The World" for a map of known

governments online.

If all of this travel has made you a mite peckish, motor over to the Lobster Direct home page at http://dorian.csi.nb.ca/~damber/lobster/. For those in search of incendiary delights, sauces with names like 911, Last Rites and Nuclear Hell can be found at the Hot Hot Hot shop (http://www.hot.presence.com/g/p/H3/). Put out that fire with a little coffee: The MotherCity Espresso site (http://www.halcyon.com/zipgun/mothercity/mothercity.html) can tell you where to go, at least when you're at the trendy coffee capital of Seattle. Hey, it's a short trip from Vancouver (and an even shorter one via hyperlink). Vegetarians will find themselves no longer left out in the cold, thanks to a guide on the Web. Surf (no turf) over to http://catless.ncl.ac.uk/Vegetarian/Guide/index.html.

Now it's time for a little dessert. A serving of flaming humor, perhaps? Gary Larson may no longer be churning out new panels, but Dr. Fun offers a daily dose of one-framers in 24-bit color. Check out the latest strips at http://www.mcc.ac.uk/Dr-Fun/drfun.html. And the AIRheads at the Annals of Improbable Research are sure to lighten your load. Check them out at one of the longest URLs you may ever be forced to type, weighing in at 56 characters: http://web.mit.edu/afs/athena/org/i/improb/www/home.html. It's worth it, though. Their poll on chocolate consumption is a real treat.



BY TERRY ROSSI

Caught up in the Net

Delphi broadens its horizons while Prodigy greases the Web

Delphi hooks Netscape

Delphi Internet Services Corporation, one of the leading providers of complete Internet access since 1992, has signed an agreement with the golden boys of the Internet — Netscape Communications (creator of one of the most popular World Wide Web server/browser combinations).

The agreement marks the first step in Delphi's plan to deliver the most accessible interactive content and services for personal computer users. Through the licensing of Netscape Navigator and Netsite Commerce Server software, Delphi Internet begins to implement its plans of building an online service with a totally open Internet standards-based platform. Netscape will likely bring secure communications, performance and advanced functionality to Delphi Internet's new platform.

"We are aggressively moving forward toward an open architecture away from the older, proprietary technologies of the 'big three' online service providers," said Dr. Alan E. Baratz, Delphi Internet's chief executive officer. "By adopting an open system, we are ensuring that our delivery platform will consistently incorporate the latest technology and that our members and partners can instantly access the richest resources and most innovative services that the Internet has to offer."

Jim Barksdale, president and CEO of Netscape, was not surprisingly just as positive, saying, "Delphi's selection of Netscape as a strategic partner will give online subscribers easy access to the vast resources available on the Internet's World Wide Web as well as to a broad range of other exciting information and entertainment services. Delphi Internet's online expertise and access to unrivaled media content, combined with Netscape's easy-to-use, standards-based secure software, will create a powerful platform for delivery of online services."

Delphi is currently rebuilding its online service based on a sophisticated platform that will readily accommodate the latest products and services being developed for the Internet. In fact, the company is developing a "third generation" interface — one that should deliver on the promise of new media types — incorporating audio and video, as well as hyper linking capabilities evolving from a first generation ASCII text-based system.

This third generation interface will differ dramatically from earlier examples because it will be built around emerging Internet standards like TCP/IP, POP (for mail), Gopher, World Wide Web (WWW) and Hypertext Markup Language (HTML).

"Because these standards are set by public use and discussion, they evolve quickly and take into account the latest

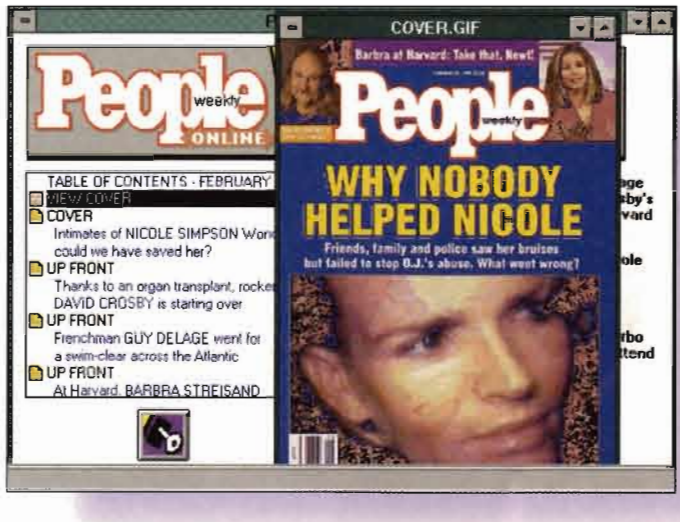
KEYWORDS
Delphi gets Netscaped
CompuServe's People
American Express on AOL

technology," said Baratz. "Also, many complementary products based on these standards are and will continue to become available. In addition, because Delphi has been a Net citizen for a long time, we know that these standards work, and are at the core of the explosive growth and utility of the Internet. Basing our interface on these standards is the soundest strategy for providing secure communications and solid performance to our subscribers now and into the future."

Delphi has also announced access to its infant service in the United Kingdom, Delphi Internet Limited. Through the aggressive global expansion of its service, Delphi Internet will initially expand its subscriber base beyond the U.S. to include U.K. members. Building on News Corporation's extensive presence in the U.K., Delphi Internet Limited will provide local access and unique, tailored services to personal computer users throughout the British Isles.

The move signals Delphi's expansion into international markets as part of the company's plans to become the premier online service for interactive entertainment, information and communications services for consumers worldwide. As a Delphi Internet Limited exclusive, members can instantly access headline news and technology, marketing, education and other up-to-the-minute information from the Times of London. Delphi Internet and its U.K. service are seamlessly integrated to enable members from the U.S. or U.K. to access services and chat with fellow members from either side of the Atlantic Ocean.

Said Baratz: "As a unit of News Corporation, a company with vast international resources, we plan to expand our services on a global basis and continue to demonstrate our commitment to bringing the benefits of a first-class online service to our members worldwide."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a swim-clear across the Atlantic
UP FRONT
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People weekly
WHY NOBODY HELPED NICOLE
Friends, family and police saw her bruises
but failed to stop O.J.'s abuse. What went wrong?

Launched just last September, Delphi Internet Limited has already become a market leader in Great Britain. In addition to the Times of London online, the U.K. service has also developed services for SKY Television, Jewish Chronicle, and two leading U.K. computer trades, *PC Review*, and *The Mac Magazine*.

In other Delphi Internet developments, members in the U.S. may now choose from two payment plans: the 10/4 Standard Plan and the 20/20 Advantage Plan. The 10/4 provides four hours of use for $10 and charges $4 for additional hours of use. Through 20/20, Delphi Internet members pay $20 for 20 hours of use plus $1.80 for additional hours.

CompuPeople

Time Inc.'s People magazine, which has been online with a CompuServe forum for a number of months, has now added its print content to the service.

People Online will offer daily news as well as the complete text of each weekly issue of *People*, along with a selection of photographs and features not available in the print magazine.

People Online
People weekly ONLINE
FEBRUARY 20, 1995
PEOPLE DAILY - FOR FRIDAY, FEB. 17, 1995
Quote of the Day
Finding Your Way Around PEOPLE Online
LAW AND ARDOR
Author Richard North Patterson finds character revealed in the courtroom
AYYYY! CLAUDIA
New York Sen. Al D'Amato linked romantically with gossip columnist
HACK'S ALL, FOLKS
Tenacious computer ace helps nab notorious cyberthief who raided his files
UPDATE
This Week's Issue: Why Nobody Helped Nicole. Table of Contents and more +
The PEOPLE Forum: Talk to staffers, make friends, sound off, download fun stuff +
What's Up: A handy guide to this week's special events, stories and celeb conferences

first celebrity guest to use the service, in a live conference on Feb. 2. Christian Slater and Sally Field followed, on Feb. 9 and Feb. 27, respectively.

CompuServe subscribers can access People Online by typing GO PEOPLE.

In a move anticipated by many in the graphics community, CompuServe says it will offer its resources to develop "a follow-on specification" to the GIF graphics format specification. The new specification, called GIF24, will "offer significant enhancements and be free and open," the company said.

This comes on the heels of The Great GIF Controversy. You've heard the story by now: GIF, or Graphics Interchange Format, is based on a compression algorithm called LZW. CompuServe, believing LZW to be in the public domain, began offering GIF as a standard in 1987. Life was great, everyone loved the file format, developers embraced it, hundreds of software products were released with everyone assuming the GIF format was in the public domain.

Not so fast.

Blue Bell, PA-based Unisys informed CompuServe in June of last year that it claimed patent rights on LZW, and CompuServe chose not to challenge the claim, which resulted in an agreement giving CompuServe a sub-license on LZW.

Tim Oren, VP of future technology, posted a message in CompuServe's Graphics Support Forum saying that CompuServe would coordinate the new

CONTINUES...

GIF21 format. GIF24 is specified to be capable of 24-bit lossless compression. Oren went on to say that CompuServe was committed to keeping GIF24 an "open" specification available at no cost.

"The new specification will be developed in cooperation with the graphics community and will include a review of relevant technology and intellectual property issues," Oren said. Email users can send questions and input on the new specification to GIF24@cis.compuserve.com.

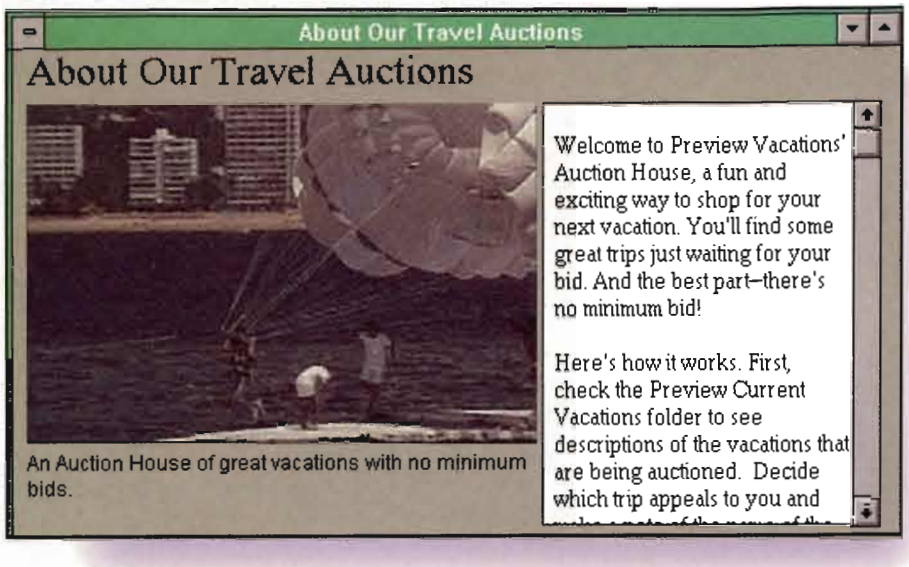
Prodigy and the Web: How'd they do that?

Prodigy continues to lead the pack with its WWW offering (now with 12,000 a day signing up) and feed off the rumors of a new Interface, code-named "P2" (check next issue for details on the P2).

The key to being able to offer Web access to a subscriber base as large as Prodigy's is a concept they call "disk staging." Disk staging is a process where Web pages and images are stored to users' local hard disk drives so that subsequent access is almost instant. The "stage" is configurable by the user. You can choose how many pages to store, when to check them for revisions (against the live Internet site) and the refresh interval at which to refresh them. Prodigy's latest version of Web browser includes some minor bug fixes and performance enhancements to the "stage" file.

Outside of all these Web developments, Prodigy has also been tending to its core service with addition of UPS access.

Until someone figures out how to email packages, the services of companies like UPS (United Parcel Service) will remain in high demand. And now with UPS's new Air Services Menu on Prodigy users can request a pickup, order supplies, email the company, or get the latest version of the tracking software. Members are treated to special deals from the Prodigy/UPS section, too. And, of course, Prodigy members can order the UPS Air Starter Kit for everything necessary to get an account going. Jump UPS for more information.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About Our Travel Auctions
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Welcome to Preview Vacations' Auction House, a fun and exciting way to shop for your next vacation. You'll find some great trips just waiting for your bid. And the best part–there's no minimum bid!
Here's how it works. First, check the Preview Current Vacations folder to see descriptions of the vacations that are being auctioned. Decide which trip appeals to you and

AOL

American Express has announced the launch of ExpressNet, its first electronic interactive service, currently available only on America Online.

ExpressNet offers a broad array of card member and travel services. It will enable enrolled American Express Card members to check the status of their Card accounts, pay their American Express bills, make travel reservations, enroll in rewards programs such as Membership Miles, and take advantage of special airline, hotel, car rental, restaurant, retail, and entertainment offers.

With ExpressNet, America Online subscribers can apply for the American Express Card online. I tried it and found the procedure to be pretty straightforward: Where do you live, work and play? How much money do you earn and do you want those extra family member AMEX cards for 30 bucks a clip? (!) All and all it was pretty pleasant and simple. Maybe too simple.

I also stumbled onto AOL's latest alliance, this one with Preview Media. The result is the new Preview Vacations section on the service (Keyword VACATIONS). Preview Vacations Online is just what you would expect from an online travel service, but with an interesting twist: The Travel Auction House.

The Travel Auction House is a "sealed bid" auction in which AOL members can compete to purchase brand-name vacation packages to such popular destinations as Hawaii and Mexico. With no minimum bids required, members will have the opportunity to purchase the packages at significant savings. New action items are posted every week, which members can preview before making their bids online.

AOL has taken a minority stake in Preview Media Inc. to help the company launch the venture.

In other AOL news, the service recently passed the 2,000,000 subscriber mark.

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Mark Burnett at APDI's BBS Service Bureau

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BY SHARI STEELE

Cryptography Restrictions in the Hot Seat

EFF sponsors suit for freedom of encryption

The Electronic Frontier Foundation is sponsoring a federal lawsuit aimed at barring the government from restricting publication of cryptographic documents and software. EFF's intention with the suit is to expand the growth and spread of privacy and security technologies, based on the argument that current export-control laws — both on their face and as applied to users of cryptographic materials — are unconstitutional.

KEYWORDS

The case for cryptography

Where to download the lawsuit

Cryptography, defined as "the science and study of secret writing," concerns the ways in which communications and data can be encoded to prevent disclosure of their contents through eavesdropping or message interception. Although the science of cryptography is very old, the desktop-computer revolution has made it possible for cryptographic techniques to become widely used and accessible to non-experts.

EFF believes that cryptography is central to the preservation of privacy and security in an increasingly computerized and networked world. Many of the privacy and security violations alleged in the now-famous Kevin Mitnick case, such as the theft of credit card numbers, the reading of other people's electronic mail, and the hijacking of other people's computer accounts, could have been prevented by widespread deployment of this technology.

The U.S. government has opposed such deployment, fearing that its citizens will be private and secure from the government as well as from other vandals.

The plaintiff in the suit is a graduate student in the Department of Mathematics at the University of California at Berkeley named Daniel J. Bernstein. Bernstein developed an encryption equation, or algorithm, and wishes to publish a mathematical paper that describes and explains it, along with a computer program that runs the algorithm.

Bernstein also wishes to discuss these items at mathematical conferences and other open, public meetings.

The problem is that the government currently treats cryptographic software as if it were a physical weapon and highly regulates its dissemination. Any individual or company who wants to export such software — or to publish on the Internet any "technical data" such as papers describing encryption software or algorithms — must first obtain a license from the State Department. Under the terms of this license, each recipi-

TERRY WILSON

CONTINUES ...

FREEDOM

ent of the licensed software or information must be tracked and reported to the government. And penalties for non-compliance can be pretty stiff—10 years in jail, a million dollar criminal fine, plus civil fines.

This legal scheme effectively prevents individuals from engaging in otherwise legal communications about encryption.

The lawsuit challenges the export-control scheme as an "impermissible prior restraint on speech, in violation of the First Amendment." Software and its associated documentation, the plaintiff contends, are published, not manufactured; they are Constitutionally protected works of human-to-human communication, like a movie, a book, or a telephone conversation. These communications cannot be suppressed by the government except under very narrow conditions—conditions that are not met by the vague and overbroad export-control laws.

In denying people the right to publish such information freely, these laws, regulations, and procedures unconstitutionally abridge the right to speak, to publish, to associate with others, and to engage in academic inquiry and study. They also have the effect of restricting the availability of a means for individuals to protect their privacy, which is also a Constitutionally protected interest.

More specifically, the current export control process:

- allows bureaucrats to restrict publication without ever going to court;
- provides too few procedural safeguards for First Amendment rights;
- requires publishers to register with the government, creating in effect a "licensed press";
- disallows general publication by requiring recipients to be individually identified;
- is sufficiently vague that ordinary people cannot know what conduct is allowed and what conduct is prohibited;
- is overbroad because it prohibits conduct that is clearly protected (such as speaking to foreigners within the United States);
- is applied overbroadly, by prohibiting export of software that contains no cryptography, on the theory that cryptography could be added to it later;
- egregiously violates the First Amendment by prohibiting private speech on cryptography because the government wishes its own opinions on cryptography to guide the public instead; and,
- exceeds the authority granted by Congress in the export control laws in many ways, as well as exceeding the authority granted by the Constitution.

If this suit is successful in its challenge of the export-control laws, it will clear the way for cryptographic software to be treated like any other kind of software. This will allow companies such as Microsoft, Apple, IBM, and Sun to build high-quality security and privacy protection into their operating systems. It will also allow computer and network users, including those who use the Internet, much more freedom to build and exchange their own solutions to these problems, such as the freely available PGP encryption program. And it will enable the next generation of Internet protocols to come with built-in cryptographic security and privacy, replacing a sagging part of today's Internet infrastructure.

The case, filed in Federal District Court for the Northern District of California, will likely take several years.

If the past is any guide, the government will use every trick and every procedural delaying tactic available to avoid having a court look at the real issues. Nevertheless, EFF remains committed to this long term project.

Full text of the lawsuit and other paperwork filed in the case is available from the EFF's online archives. The exhibits which contain cryptographic information are not available online, because making them publicly available on the Internet and BBSs could be considered an illegal export until the law is struck down. The non-cryptographic exhibits and other documents including the complaint, as well as a series of letters between Bernstein and various government people regarding crypto export are available at:

http://www.eff.org/pub/EFF/Policy/Crypto/ITAR_export/Bernstein_case/ftp.eff.org,

/pub/EFF/Policy/Crypto/ITAR_export/Bernstein_case/gopher.eff.org,

1/EFF/Policy/Crypto/ITAR_export/Bernstein_case

Shari Steele is Director of Legal Services for the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing freedom and openness in computer-based communications. Send your legal questions to ssteele@eff.org or c/o BBS Magazine.

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bbs.notebook

BY BOB BROWNE

South Shore Secrets

SYSOP(S): Paul Crimmins, Mary Higgins, Herb Stelzer, Candy Alexdon, Donna Beals
LOCATION: Cohasset, MA
PHONE NUMBER: 617.383.2789
MODEM TYPE(S): Practical Peripherals and AT&T, 14,400
BBS SOFTWARE: OraComm for OS/2
BBS MOTTO OR THEME: A new show every day. Home of the MaryNet. Adults only. Have fun!

Cohassett, Massachusetts' South Shore Secrets, in its eleventh year of operation, is proudly operated by five dedicated sysops — each of whom maintain different facets of the operation. To the user, Secrets is a family of adult members that get to know each other not only on an individual basis but also as a group though nightly group chats and monthly parties at various establishments in the Boston area.

Sysop Paul Crimmins told me SSS began with nothing but a motherboard fastened to a piece of plywood with an 80MB hard drive attached to it. Over the years, with help from members who have made contributions and donated hardware, they have built SSS into a state-of-the-art online system.

The ratio of users is 75 percent male and 25 percent female. The female members help out by chatting with other members, making Secrets the unique BBS that it is. And they are steadily increasing their female membership by allowing 30 days of free access to women users so they can come online and see for themselves that Secrets is a safe place to play and have fun.

There's no pressure from other members here and confidentiality is one of the top priorities. They also have a private "Female Only" area where women can chat with other women about female concerns, health issues, whatever.

SSS is operated for the entertainment of its members and all members have a say in what direction Secrets goes in and how the donated money is spent.

They also have various people in the professional and medical field that give advice, try to help people get jobs or help them through life's trials and tribulations.

SSS is run using OraComm software for OS/2. Paul said the reason for the OS/2 choice is that "it has all the features you can get in a BBS software package and the cost is far cheaper than the others. OraComm OS/2 does not charge for added features like the rest," he said. "You can support up to a 100 lines on one CPU. In any case it is not the software a system runs, but the sysops and membership that make a great BBS. This OS/2 version is rock solid and the support is far superior to anything we have ever experienced. The programmers show up on site and service us! OraComm OS/2 is not to be confused with OraComm for DOS. These are two separate companies and have nothing to do with each other."

SSS is proud of its own network called MaryNet, named after sysop Mary Higgins who came up with the idea of getting other BBSs to link with SSS and create a nationwide network of users. In early 1994, MaryNet was linked with 26 other OraComm boards that carried a combined membership of around 8,000 users nationwide. One of the most exciting features is the weekly group chat sessions when all the boards link together at the same time and meet in the chat areas, exchanging experiences, stories and just chatting about anything they want. File exchanges and email exchanges take place daily, which makes the transfer of information virtually endless.

SSS is an enlightened adult BBS not specifically catering to any one calling pool. With over 200 sigs and network areas, there is a place for everyone. SSS tries to cater to its members' needs and if there's a topic that needs discussing, then a new sig is added for that topic. Most importantly they want their members to be happy and have fun without any bashing going on.

Most of the files featured at SSS are adult in nature, but they also have an extensive file area for computer utilities and programs so the members can be up and running and enjoying what they have to offer. SSS has 24-hour technical support in the event new users get stuck or need help in using the software running on OS/2 Warp.

Things are always changing at SSS. User meetings are held every month with all members invited. The format of the board is decided at these meetings by means of voting. (The meetings are carried live online but users who cannot attend can submit ideas and vote as well.)

In the future, the crew at SSS hopes to grow locally and expand the MaryNet to cover all of the North American states.

According to Paul, SSS will strive to maintain a BBS that is without censorship and sysop intervention. They will continue to be a place where the members can be free to be themselves without fear of ridicule or rejection.

The Squirrel's Nest

PHONE NUMBER: 815.795.6371
SYSOP: Neal Roberts
LOCATION: Mareilles, IL
MODEM(S): Hayes Ultra 14.4 and Practical Peripheral 14,400FXSA
BBS SOFTWARE: Wildcat M10
BBS THEME: We're a family BBS with a little bit of everything. Files for DOS, Windows, DOOM, OS/2, mail, and plenty of Doors.

When I asked sysop Neal Roberts to tell me about his BBS, he said they started as a support BBS for a local users group that he and his girlfriend were associated with in 1992. Unfortunately, they quickly found that the users didn't want to help support the system, so to meet expenses, the BBS became a subscription system to make ends met.

They tried all sorts of things to generate interest and income. Files and lots of mail have proven to be best. The addition of Planet Connect (satellite delivery) has been a great help with new files and over 15,000 messages daily.

When Internet access became available for a reasonable cost, they jumped on and never looked back.

Neal also told me he surely doesn't run his BBS for profit — it's more like an addiction. He said he just loves doing it.

Neal told me that he chose the software he did because after expressing an interest in setting up a BBS, a friend brought over a Wildcat! test-drive. He found it so easy to use that he upgraded to the commercial version, Wildcat! 3.01S. Even after looking at a number of other BBS packages, Neal said he never found one he likes as much as Wildcat! — until maybe now. "We are taking a big step," Neal told me, "by changing to the new Major BBS 'Worldgroup' software with the intention of trying to capture a local interest in the Internet."

Neal continued to say that "with The Major BBS and eight lines, we feel that it will be a great success."

Between six CDROMs and the hard drive, they have about 40,000 files, so users can download plenty and always find something new. There are 27 Doors available for users to play. These include The Legend of the Red Dragon, The Pit, and the most popular, King of the Board.

The Bulletin menu showed over 20 bulletins, including ones regarding the use of the system, and also plenty of Door game score boards.

There are over 600 conferences you can join and participate in. The Squirrel's Nest carries Wildnet, Fidonet, and the K12 Freeway mail network, making for a varied range of topics.

Neal said that his BBS does not cater to any particular calling populous, and that "every time I think we are getting a specific group, everything changes. First it's file hounds, then Door players or users hungry for mail."

Neal says the Internet has definitely changed things with BBSs, that people are starting to realize what email is and that more and more BBS users are getting into the message bases.

Neal also told me he thinks that with so many people buying new computers (complete with modems), the BBS will give many newcomers to the world of telecommunications their first online experience.

Neal's occupation has nothing to do with computers, but his BBS hobby has become a way of life.

"Sometimes I think that I must be nuts" Neal exclaimed. "However the people that I have met and the satisfaction I get from running a popular bulletin board system makes it all worthwhile."

Starview 2

SYSOP: Rodney Ackerson
LOCATION: Cedar Falls, Iowa
PHONE NUMBER: 319.983.2318
MODEM TYPE: USR Sportster 28,800
BBS SOFTWARE: Wildcat! v4.01
BBS motto or theme: The latest and hottest shareware games available, utilities, communications files, patches for programs, and Windows applications.

Rodney Ackerson started his BBS as a hobby which he claims gives him tons of enjoyment and a terrific sense of accomplishment.

"I started on October first of 1993 with one computer," Rodney said, "and I now have three computers that keep everything going."

Rodney runs Wildcat! 4.01 software and claims it is the best out of all that he has tried. He feels it is one of the easiest packages for new users to get familiar with and it is extremely flexible from the sysop's point of view, too.

Starview 2 prides itself on the Door games that it makes available to users. With 120 (registered) Doors, users should have no problem finding an online game or two to get involved with. Rodney has three Door games that he wrote himself and they happen to be some of the most popular on his board: Mayberry Trivia, Dick Van Dyke Trivia, and the Early TV Trivia.

If trivia isn't your bag then just about any Door game you can think of is available.

As for message areas, Starview 2 supports more than its share including Internet email and newsgroups via Planet Connect, plus the MSI

CONTINUES...

SEE PAGE 11

support network which gives Starview over 4,000 available message topics and areas.

Starview 2 is open to any and all callers, offering something for all ages.

Their basic goal for the future is to try to keep up with the "big time" BBSs out there.

When asked what he thought the future held for BBSing, Rodney said that BBSs are in the future for all of us.

"It is where everything is headed. You will communicate with the world using a computer, and BBSing is part of that future."

Straight Board BBS

SYSOP: Ray Sulich
LOCATION: Virginia Beach, VA
PHONE NUMBER: 804.468.6454
MODEM TYPES: USRobotics V.Everything and USRobotics 16.8 Dual Standard
BBS SOFTWARE: PCBoard 15.21M/10
BBS MOTTO OR THEME: Submarines, Nautical.

Straight Board BBS was started in Great Lakes, Illinois, running GT Power BBS software. Then around June of 1991, sysop Ray Sulich outgrew GT Power and purchased his first version of PCBoard. After converting the hoard over, he packed it up and moved (as the Navy makes you do once and a while) to Virginia Beach in 1993.

Ray told me that he started a BBS to give callers what he thought would be the perfect board: Doors, files and message bases all wrapped up in one easy-to-use package.

Straight Board BBS has 547 file areas listed, with topics running the gamut from A to Z. There are approximately 46,000 files available for download between the CDs and the hard drives.

On my visit, there were over 40 bulletins listed with varying topics (most concern the BBS itself); over 50 registered Door games (running through DoorBill); and online e-zines (electronic magazines).

Ray says the system averages about 100 callers a day, many of whom dial in to follow some of the 1,300 email conferences (which give this BBS a total of about 500,000 messages available for reading at any one time).

Along with Internet email and newsgroups, they also carry other popular networks like Rime, Fido, Ilink, and others.

"I love PCBoard's open structure," Ray said when asked why he ran the software. "That, coupled with the PCBoard Programming Language has allowed me to customize the software so that it's very easy to navigate, and is quite pleasing to the eye. I also have grown to enjoy the high quality of Clark Development's technical support. I can't seem to exhaust the seemingly endless resources and possibilities the software presents. The supplied utilities are top notch, and third-party support is great. It also has UUCP and Fido mail services that come with the package. I use QFront for my Fido mail front-end, Upload Processor for my upload virus scanner, and DW_TIC as our Fido file processor."

Straight Board carries plenty of Door games as well, including Lord Usurper, BRE (InterBBS), Tradewars, Global War, The PIT, OOII, King of the Board, Sunrise Trivia, Links Golf, Food Fight and Card Sharks Deluxe.

In the very near future Ray wants to add at least four more nodes, as well as a direct connection to the Internet.

Ray has some interesting things to say about the future of BBSing and the industry's reputation.

"I think that we have to watch the image that BBSs are putting out to the general public," he said. "Everywhere we look we see the "scandals" concerning pirated software and pornographic material. We as sysops need to improve this image by providing systems that we wouldn't be afraid to have our own children call. If we decide to provide 'adult' material for our callers, it is up to us to be 100 percent sure that only adults have access to that material. I personally can't be 100 percent sure, so I don't provide it.

"On the issue of pirating software, I am a shareware author myself, so it goes without saying that I don't allow that sort of thing to go on here, and I really look down on those that do allow it. I feel that a BBS is a place where you should be able to take your entire family for enjoyment and relaxation. We try to provide that sort of service here at a price that all can afford (free)."

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SUBURBAN

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SOFTWARE

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BBS

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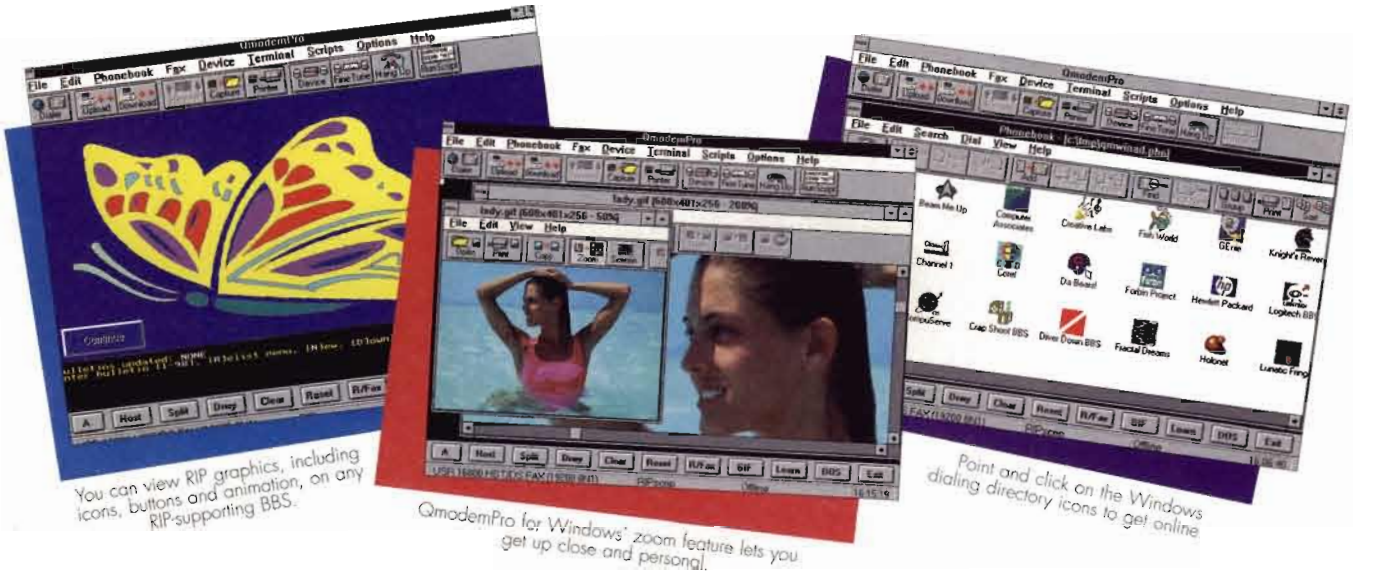

You can view RIP graphics, including icons, buttons and animation, on any RIP-supporting BBS.

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QmodemPro for Windows delivers more advanced graphic features than any other communications software.

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BY MICHAEL A. KUYKENDALL

TeleCool!

TeleFinder boards push the envelope

I was planning to take a shot at explaining parity, stop bits and other necessary but uninteresting things; however, lucky for you, I got hold of the latest TeleFinder BBS list and all bets were off.

KEYWORDS
The new TeleFinder GUI
Switchable preferences
Boards to check out

I put on Pink Floyd's "The Wall" (your inspirational telesurfing music may vary), powered up the Mac, and was on my way.

One of the boards I touched down on is a BBS in Fort Worth, Texas, called the KloneZone. The KloneZone supports Apple II, Macintosh, Newton and Power Macintosh, as well as MS-DOS, OS/2, Unix, and other computer platforms. The system is up 23 hours a day (down one hour for Fidonet mail processing), and supports up to 28.8 Kbps. An interesting aspect of KloneZone is that it runs on an 8MB Power Mac 8100/80 (something few of us sysops can afford).

Sysop Dan O'Leary told me about his "beta-ing" the newest version of TeleFinder, version 3.5. After hearing about its power, I had to give it whirl. My verdict? It's amazing.

Version 3.5 has both a Mac and Windows client that allow users to get an incredible graphic look and feel, and it also supports ANSI and TTY terminal programs.

But the coolest thing about the new version of the host software is that sysops can customize each section of the board with their own graphics, sounds and icons. Again, really cool.

Let me try to relive this for you. When you first call the KloneZone, you

Figure 1

get the screen shown in Figure 1, along with the sound of Darth Vader asking, "What is thy bidding, oh master."

Dan has created different icons for each of his conference areas (message forums) and file libraries. KloneZone carries 1.4 gigabytes of some of the latest Macintosh public domain/shareware files, a 240MB hard drive for messages, and dual 200+ MB hard disks for user-submitted uploads and additional message areas.

If you click on the "Sight&Video" icon/eyeball, you get the screen shown in Figure 2. As you can see, Dan is into some creative uses of the Mandelbrot series. Note the message areas FILM, TV, VIDEO, etc. These are some of the Fidonet echoes that KloneZone carries. The home-grown message areas are in both uppercase and lower — one of the ways you can tell when a sysop has mixed in local message areas with the worldwide Fidonet echoes.

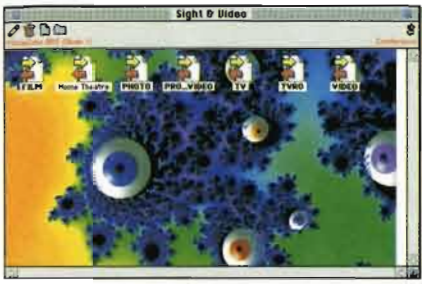

Figure 2

Another nice area of his board is the "Computers" section (Figure 3), where almost all the different platforms are covered. And as you enter each of these, you're addressed by the uniquely assigned sound associated with it (I love those sounds).

I asked Dan about the integrated sounds and graphics. He said that the new TeleFinder allows each sysop to create his or her own "preference" file,

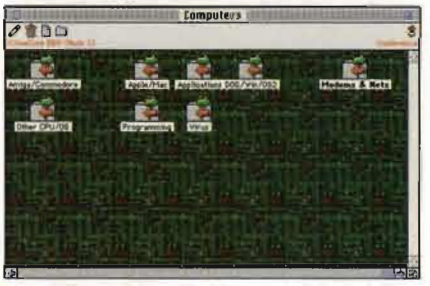

Figure 3

with the graphic and sound layouts embedded in the document. This allows the caller to use the same client software, and just switch between preference files for the custom look and feel of each different board they get on.

It's similar to the "configuration" file NovaLink Pro and First Class use, but an easier way to think of it is as a connection file like the CTB tools on your Mac.

KloneZone is an excellent BBS run by a confirmed Mac fanatic. It can be reached at 817.367.2712 or through its Fidonet address 1:130/1015.

Spider Island Software should be congratulated for the excellent work it has done to continually improve upon TeleFinder, coming a long way in the last few years. To bear witness to that, try some of these other TeleFinder boards:

THE CANDYSTORE BBS
407.891.0946
A free BBS with no upload or download ratios, CandyStore supports up to 28.8Kbps and runs off a Quadra 840av with 24MB of RAM, System 7.5, two CD-ROM drives (one networked from a Performa 550), and three hard disks (700MB, 1.2GB and a 500MB). The sysop, Angelheart, networks into the board from a Performa 475.

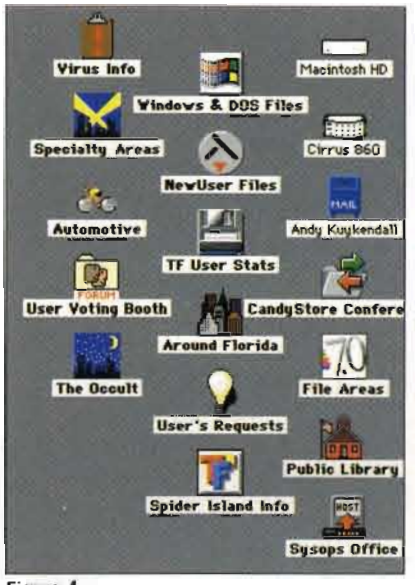

Figure 4

From the main desktop (Figure 4), you can see that the board has lots of things for people to do. An example of what's available in the Files Area can be seen in Figure 5.

I like the sysop's straightforward attitude. He even has a "Sysop's S**t List" section for those users who abuse the board—beware.

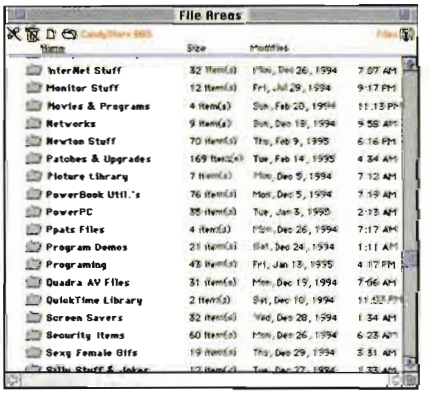

Figure 5

THE ASSOCIATION MAC BBS
810.695.695, 810.695.6744
Home of the Associated Macintosh Users Group, this board has lots of good files and obvious Internet influences, as demonstrated by its "Fresh Off the Internet" files areas shown in Figure 6. The boards supports up to 14.4 Kbps.

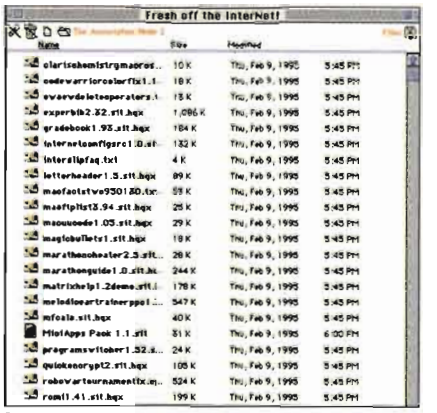

Figure 6

APPLESEEDS BBS
919.481.4896, 919.469.5867
Another user group's board (Raleigh Mac Users Group) with lots of files and good conferences (Figure 7).

I like user group boards like AppleSeeds because more often than not this is where you can find answers to problems no one else can solve.

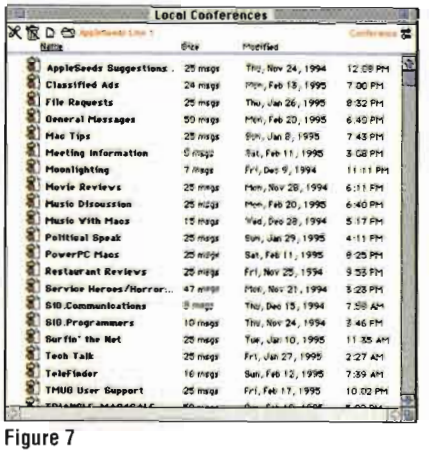

Figure 7

As with most GUI packages, the look you get is strongly dependent upon the version of host software the sysop is running. The more current the host software, the better your chance for custom graphics, sounds, Internet connectivity, etc.

If you're a Mac sysop, take a break one weekend, call some Mac boards and see what's out there. With all the advances just in the past year, chances are, you'll be astounded.

Michael A. Kuykendall can be reached through the Online Macintosh Users' Group BBS, Macintosh Online, at 404.988.9904, or through his email address at andykirk@aol.com.

BY MIKE ROBINSON

Pros and Cons of ISDN

On the one hand it's expensive.
On the other — it's expensive.

ISDN (Integrated Systems Data Network) has been touted as the medium which will ultimately bring advanced technology into the home. It is supposed to be able to carry phone, cable television, music, and data communications — in short, most communications technologies. When I first heard of ISDN several years ago, I, too, thought it sounded like a good idea. After all, if we could bring all these things into our homes on one line, just imagine the benefits. But...

KEYWORDS
How to get IDSN
What it costs
Alternatives

First, the good news

For example, consider a computer like the one I'm using now. It has a fax-modem attached, so obviously it can send and receive fax and data transmissions. Now, how about adding voice telephone capabilities, including both live conversation and voice-mail capabilities? While we're at it, we can hook up cable television and radio channels. Oh yeah, let's not forget high-speed data transmission, so that we can have real-time Internet access. This is ISDN.

Sound like a good idea? Well, apparently a lot of companies thought so, as several over the past few years have developed plans to get involved in ISDN.

Two years ago, ISDN was reserved for the elite few, mainly geared toward connecting corporations located within a limited geographic area. Today, ISDN connections for data transmission are being installed in homes across America. It's fast, it's reliable, and it's supported by a wide range of Internet providers. But if you're already pulling out the Yellow Pages and looking for a local ISDN connection, better have a seat.

The bad news

The difficulty in getting ISDN in your home can range from a simple phone call to months of aggravating problems, or, as in some cases, no possibility of connectivity at all. Here are some big things to look out for:

LOCATION ISDN is not available everywhere. Certainly if you live in Backwater, USA, your chances of ISDN are slim. But what about the major cities? Most big ones have ISDN somewhere in their vicinity, usually downtown where companies with big bucks can pay for it. And be careful about how your provider connects you to its ISDN trunk. At the time of this writing, Bell Atlantic of Pennsylvania (my local telephone

company) only provides commercial connections. So, if you live in an area serviced by ISDN and if you install a business line into your house, then and only then can you get ISDN.

Number of Hosts, Domains, and Nets

Date	Hosts	Domains	Replied ToPing*	Network Class A	B	C
Jan 95	4,852,000	71,000	970,000	91	4979	34340
Oct 94	3,864,000	56,000	1,024,000	93	4831	32098
Jul 94	3,212,000	46,000	707,000	89	4493	20628
Apr 94	-N/A-					
Jan 94	2,217,000	30,000	576,000	74	4043	16422
Oct 93	2,056,000	28,000		69	3849	12615
Jul 93	1,776,000	26,000	464,000	67	3728	9972
Apr 93	1,486,000	22,000	421,000	58	3409	6255
Jan 93	1,313,000	21,000		54	3206	4998

Compiled by Network Wizards, http://www.nw.com/

CONFUSION/COST I've been through this game before. New technologies come out, no one seems to know how to handle it, and consumers are left out in the cold.

I can usually figure these things out, but this time I'm as confused about this as everyone else. I'd like to know how much it's *really* going to cost me to get this installed. If I estimate $1,000 plus $50 a month, it'll probably be $1,500 and $75per month. Or I'll probably buy the wrong equipment because I don't really know what I'm doing.

One thing I do know for sure: I'm not going to recommend ISDN to anyone at this time—at least not to anyone without a PhD in technical studies. And if I do, it will be after they sign an affidavit stating that I warned against it and won't be held responsible.

Location isn't the only thing affecting cost. I recently (Dec. '94) researched what it would cost to connect my home PC to an Internet service provider via ISDN. The two companies I used were Bell Atlantic–PA and Performance Systems, Inc. (PSI). Here's what I found.

Service provider installation (includes 3 months of service)	$200.00
Monthly service charge (29 free hours)	29.00
Hourly rate after first 29 hours	2.00
Telephone company installation	169.75
NT-1 Terminator	171.00
ISDN Card (est.)	200.00
Monthly line charge (phone bill)	34.75
Usage rate per minute	0.05
FIXED STARTUP COSTS	**$769.75**
VARIABLE COSTS:	
Monthly cost, 15 hours/month	79.75
Monthly cost, 25 hours/month	109.75
Monthly cost, 50 hours/month	226.00

This is beginning to be a major investment. And I'm still not sure I got all the prices right. I know I left out the monthly charge for having a business line in my home, and I don't even know the per-minute charge for a business-line call. The five-cents-per-minute ISDN charge is for local calls only, so if you aren't close to your Internet service provider, it's going to get expensive. I suppose if I really wanted ISDN, I'd save enough money to put up the $800 start-up costs. But I know I use my modem at least 25 hours each month and 50 hours doesn't seem like a long shot. So for having ISDN for one year, I'll have paid out over $3,000—something that I just don't want to do.

COST II As is all too often the case, the cost of cutting-edge technology is outside the reach of most individuals. In this case, cost is directly tied into your location. As mentioned before, Bell Atlantic-PA charges business rates for an ISDN connection. Do you live in Connecticut? Then you can get ISDN for about $40 per month in off-peak hours, with unlimited usage. I'm being intentionally vague here, because the rules are different everywhere, and they change constantly. For instance, Bell Atlantic will probably propose to offer the same flat-rate off-peak monthly cost as found elsewhere, but this service won't be ready for at least six months.

Options

Modems are the current staple of data communications, and for now they'll be my main choice. The real driving force for me (as with most people) is cost. While I'd love an ISDN connection, I certainly don't have the thousands of dollars needed to fund such a venture. For $100 plus about $20 per month I can get a decent Internet connection that will let me do all I need. So please, ISDN providers, don't bother me with ISDN until you get it right.

Mike Robinson
mrobinsn@wharton.upenn.edu.

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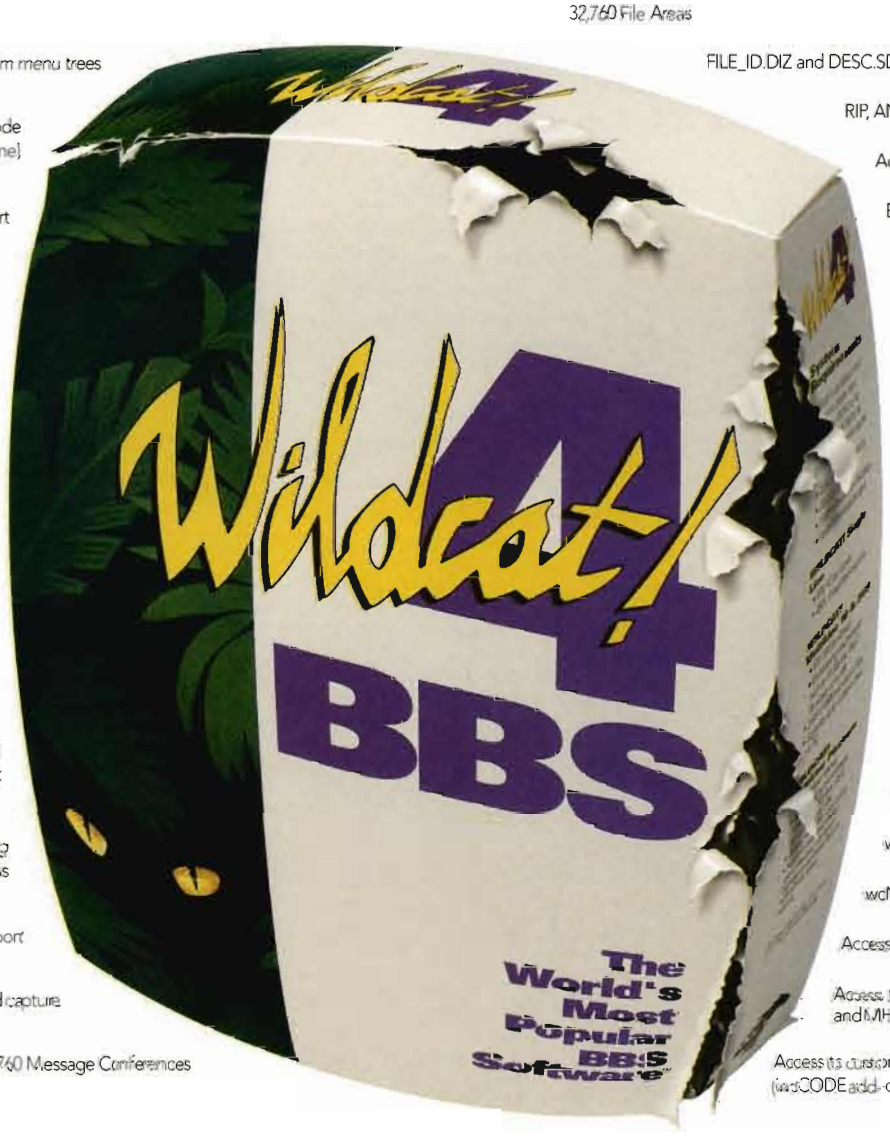
BBS

BURSTING WITH FEATURES!



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RIP, ANSI, and TTY auto-sensing

Activity audit trails

Event processor

Downloadable bulletins

LAN, Desqview, OS/2 and Windows friendly

28 Sysop utilities including:

wcDRAW screen drawing utility

MakeMenu menu tree designer

wcMAIL .QWK mail processor

wcECHO .QWK netmail processor

MAKEQUES questionnaire facility

wcFILE CD-ROM file description processor

wcPROMPT prompt editor

wcPACK message packer

wcMODEM modem setup utility

wcNODE activity viewer

Access to fax-on-demand (wcPRO add-on)

Access to Internet E-mail, Usenet News and MHS (wcGATE add-on)

Access to custom Wildcat! applications (wcCODE add-on)

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The World's Most Popular BBS Software.™

There's a reason why more than 35,000 sysops worldwide run Wildcat! This powerful BBS software is packed with more performance features than any other product on the market. Today's

sysops know they can count on Mustang Software to deliver a complete, feature-rich BBS solution at a real value. In fact, most of the features we include as standard are an extra cost in other products. So it's easy to understand why Wildcat! has been selected by more sysops than any other BBS package.

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A centralized, PC-based system, Wildcat! lets callers send, receive and view messages and files, access external applications and chat 24 hours a day. Wildcat! 4 BBS software is available in four configurations, from single-line up to 250 total connections. So whether you're a home office-based entrepreneur with a single modem or a corporate system administrator running a multi-line customer support hotline, there's a Wildcat! version to fit your needs.

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"If you're looking to set up your own electronic bulletin board service (BBS), look no further than Mustang Software's new Wildcat! BBS Suite, version 4.0."
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"Mustang deserves credit for creating a superb successor to its already impressive BBS program."
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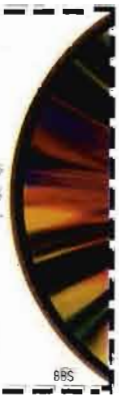

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BY GAELYNE R. MORANEC

The Hard Facts on Hardware

Better relationship with your Commodore may be a chip away

Over the years the hardware scene for Commodore users has significantly changed the way we communicate with one another. In the beginning, we were using 300 baud modems manufactured to connect directly to the C64's user port — 12 years later I'm using an off-the-shelf 14.4K device without a hassle.

KEYWORDS
Storage devices
RAM drive
JiffyDOS

Following is a look at some of the hardware meant to enhance your BBSing experience, not to mention the unique experience we all encounter with the Commodore.

In the fast lane

First let's get the technobabble out of the way. To modem in the fast lane (above 2400 baud for 64 users, 9600 for 128 users), a special type of device is needed between the 64/128 and modem. More than a modem interface, ACIA/UART devices "drive" the modem and control the I/O functions between the computer and modem — they connect to the cartridge port of the Commodore.

There are two such devices on the market, the SwiftLink and the HART. The SwiftLink uses the 6551 ACIA (Asynchronous Communication Interface Adapter) chip. The HART uses the National Semiconductor NS8250A UART (Universal Asynchronous Receiver/Transmitter) chip. In case you were wondering, "HART" stands for HARTRONICS Asynchronous Receiver/Transmitter.

What are the speed limits on the modem fast lane? The SwiftLink allows up to 38.4K bps; the HART cart permits 57.6K bps. These devices require terminal software programmed to recognize them, such as Novaterm 9.5, Fritzterm, Kermit v2.2, Terminal One, Desterm or Dialogue128.

I've not handled a HART device, but the SwiftLink comes with a DB-9 connector on one end and the standard cartridge port connector on the other. A small switch on the front of the cartridge allows you to switch between NMI and IRQ modes, depending on the requirements of the terminal software. A standard DB-9 to DB-25 cable is required to connect an external modem to the computer.

RAM and disk storage

Another major change over the years has come in the form of storage devices used with Commodores. Twelve years ago Datasettes were used to load and save programs. Today I regularly download files directly to a RAM device which allows me up to 16 megabytes of disk storage in a semi-permanent (ie, battery backed) form. High capacity RAM and disk drives are quite useful for both BBS callers and sysops wanting fast access to more files online. They also improve the overall operation with faster loading BBS modules. RAM devices are nice because everything is written to or read from the chip. There are no mechanical parts to slow things down or wear out. And access time for reading or writing to RAM is much faster than when writing to a physical disk drive.

RAM Expansion Units (REUs) are

known as temporary storage devices, since as soon as the computer is turned off whatever was stored in the RAM memory is lost. A device called BBU (for Battery Backup Unit), sold by Performance Peripherals Inc., allows data stored in the REU to be maintained when the computer is off. Usually data stored in here is copied to an actual disk drive for permanent storage.

Commodore brand REU's can be found without too much trouble in the used market; the 512K 1750 Clone manufactured by Chip Level Designs is available through Software Support International.

There is one drawback, however. Though the Commodore brand REUs can be upgraded to two megabytes, due to the compact design of the 1750 Clone, these cannot be upgraded beyond their original 512K capacity.

Semi-permanent RAM devices continue to hold data and programs within RAM, as they have a power supply separate from the computer. RAMLink and RAMDrive are two such devices. (RAMDrive has an internal backup battery, while the RAMLink uses an external one.)

RAMLink is available with various amounts of memory using one and/or four megabyte SIMM chips. It can hold from one to 16MB, depending on the arrangement of SIMMs. It also comes with an REU port so the memory from an REU may be utilized. A pass-through port is available as well, so an additional cartridge can be added.

RAMDrive is more compact, with its battery built in, and it can easily be moved from one computer to another. RAMDrive comes in three memory configurations: 512K, one megabyte or two megabyte. The one megabyte unit can be upgraded to two megabytes, but the 512K unit cannot be upgraded.

The 1541 disk drive is a venerable old friend (one I wouldn't be without), but I depend on other disk drives for my day-to-day use. For instance, there are disk drives for the Commodore using 3.5 disks and offering greater storage and improved speeds over the 1541 (or 1571) disk drive. Commodore's 1581 drive gives 3,160 free disk blocks, or about 800K using DD (double density) 3.5 inch disks.

Within the last few years, Creative Micro Designs Inc. (CMD) began marketing a newer 3.5-inch disk drive which offers compatibility with the 1581 — with a few enhancements. The FD series drives come in two types: the FD-2000 and the FD-4000. The 2000 unit uses DD disks or high density disks that give 6,336 free blocks — the equivalent of 1.6 megabytes.

The 4000 unit uses the same two disk formats and utilizes Enhanced Density disks to give (are you ready for this) 12,736 blocks or 3.2 megabytes of disk space. This is the largest storage capacity of any floppy drive available on the market, irrespective of platform.

CMD also markets HD series hard drives for the Commodore, available from 20MB to a gigabyte or more of storage space. The price may seem stiff ($299.95 for a 20MB HD series hard drive), but they use SCSI technology and come complete with their own power supply, controller card and a sturdy metal case. The drives can be used on other platforms, too, allowing further use and compatibility. Other Commodore platform hard drives, such as the Lt. Kernal, ICT or DataChief, are no longer pushed but may be found on the used market.

The FDxx, HD series hard drives, RAMLink and RAMDrive devices all function similarly in terms of disk usage. Each will emulate common Commodore disk drive types, such as the 1541, 1571, and 1581, using "emulation partitions." Another kind of partition known as "Native Mode" can also be used. Native partitions can be up to 16MB for the CMD RAMLink and HD series devices, or up to disk or RAM capacity for the FDxx drives or for PPI's RAMDrive. Native partitions, in case you were wondering, are used in a manner very similar to the MS-DOS structure, allowing nested subdirectories.

Fast load cartridges can help speed up older disk drives. And most of those carts have features that enhance the Commodore in other ways, with such things as easier disk commands, program capturing (for making archival backups of copy protected software) and graphics printing.

JiffyDOS, another CMD product, enhances the overall operation and speed of the disk drives by replacing the standard DOS chips in Commodore (and other compatible disk drives) and the Kernal ROM in the computer itself. Aside from enhanced disk drive speeds for loading, saving and reading files, it gives new, easier DOS commands and utilizes the F-Keys for some of its most activated features. Commands for loading files are as easy as typing ^ (up arrow) and the filename. All CMD disk drives have JiffyDOS included as part of the drive itself. RAMLink has the kernal ROM built into it for both the 64 and 128 computers.

There's a bit of pro and con involved as to whether or not one really needs new Commodore hardware. For many, the stock devices will suit them fine. Others want or need to be power users with all the hardware to match. It's really a matter of personal preference and perspective. I'd not want to return to the 300 baud and Datasette days, but it's nice to have a range of choices available.

Where to find it all

HART Cartridge: HARTRONICS, 145 Lincoln Ave, Montclair, NJ 07042, 201.783.7264. Contact Mark Hatten

SwiftLink cartridge, RAMLink, FD series drives, HD series hard drives, Action Replay Cartridge, JiffyDOS: Creative Micro Designs, Inc. (CMD), PO Box 646, East Longmeadow, MA 01028. 413.525.0023 voice, 413.525.0147 fax

BBU, RAMDrive: Performance Peripherals, Inc., 5 Upper Loudon Road, Loudonville, NY 12211. 800.925.9774 voice, US Orders and literature; 518.436.0485 voice/fax, tech support and orders.

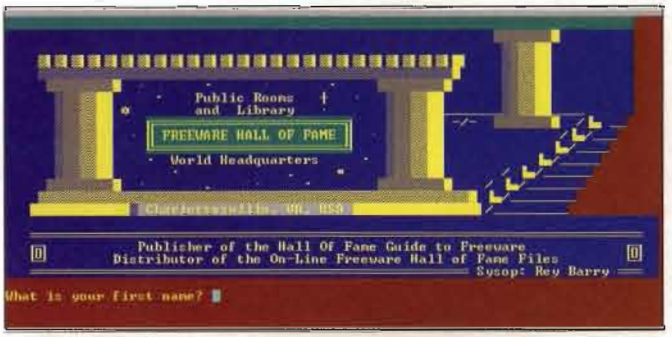
1750 Clone, SnapShot: Software Support International, 800.356.1179

Commodore disk drives (1541, 1571, or 1581's), and other hardware: Software Hut, 800.932.6442; Global Upgrades, Inc. 914.624.3200, 914.624.3239 fax.

Gaelyne Moranec is a freelance writer currently in Australia seeking out Commodore developments down under. She can usually be found in the Fidonet CBM echo. Comments or suggestions can be sent to 3:800/809.128, gaelyne.moranec@aftrs.edu.au, or in care of BBS Magazine.

The Best Things in Life are Freeware

Bet you didn't know there is a Hall of Fame for freeware. "The Freeware Hall of Fame" list, otherwise known as HOF, was started several years ago by Rey Barry and is, according to the list, "a guide to freeware, a sorted index to free programs and databases commonly found on public access bulletin boards around the world. The programs on this list have been tested and found to work as described, and to be worth downloading."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World Headquarters
Publisher of the Hall Of Fame Guide to Freeware
Distributor of the On-Line Freeware Hall of Fame Files
Sysop: Rey Barry
What is your first name?

FREEWARE
SHAREWARE
ODD NUMBERS FREE
EVEN NUMBERS $$$
1 DOS utilities
3 BBS, modem & FAX programs
5 PC diagnostic & tech tools
7 Databases (ZIP codes, etc.)
9 Programmer utilities
11 Games & recreation
13 Network utilities
15 Esoteric programs
17 Graphics & sound
19 Printer utilities
21 WINdows utilities
23 Food & drink Aviation/PS
25 Anti-virus programs
27 Archive & compaction progs
29 Word proc, editors, readers
31 Text files Stage/screen
33 Business & finance
34 Freeware Hall of Fame
35 PHOF updates
36 Internet/MAUG/CCUG
TODAY'S UPLOADS
File descriptions tell you when WIN is required.
When price shows $1000 it means author has hidden it from sysops.

Mr. Barry's list is limited to freeware, or programs that require no fee for individual use. However, being freeware alone doesn't necessarily guarantee a spot on the list. It must also be a well written program that performs as promised.

Don't look for any games in the HOF; they're not there. What you will find are some of the finest utilities and applications available. Many are tools you couldn't find elsewhere at any price. And all are free for you to use and pass along to friends.

Following is a sampling (with my reviews) of some of the programs you'll find on the "Hall of Fame" list:

HyperCD version 4.0

HYPCD40.ZIP
by HyperDyne 2000 Software

This is not just another Windows audio CD player for your CDROM drive. What makes this one different is the size.

When you run the program from your desktop, it creates a little window about 2 inches square in the lower right corner of the screen. All the controls you need are within that small space. It has a volume slide control and everything else you could want—even an eject button.

Bottom line: HyperCD is small, simple to use, and always out of the way. Get rid of your bulky CD player and replace it with HyperCD.

PICEM ver 3.2

PICEM32.ZIP
by John Bridges

PICEM is a graphic file viewer that will not only display .PIC, .PCX, .GIF, and .TGA files, but will also let you adjust contrast and brightness, and then save changes to disk.

Although there are several command-line parameters you can use, the simplest way to operate PICEM is to just run it in a directory containing the graphics you want to view. A list of available files will be shown, from which you simply pick the ones you want by tagging the files with the space bar. When the image is displayed, adjust the brightness and contrast with the INS/DEL and the (+) and (-) keys.

As I mentioned above, you can the save the altered file to disk in any of the formats. This makes it an excellent choice for converting graphics between formats.

Another way to use it is by way of the command line. Just type PICEM FILENAME (wild cards are accepted).

There's a lot of power packed into this little file. Place it somewhere in your path and you'll always have a fast an easy graphic file viewer at hand.

CLONE ver 2.10

CLONE210.ZIP
by Eric Tauck

CLONE is a quick and clean single-pass disk copier. It comes equipped with several options, such as formatting the target disk when needed, setting the number of copies to be made, serial numbers and more. These options can be used at the command line or stored in the environment with a SET statement in your AUTOEXEC.BAT file.

There are no fancy menus like those found in other shareware disk copiers, but CLONE is a keeper that you'll want to add to your toolbox.

HDInfo Release #7

HD0794R7.ZIP
by Ray Martin

This is the definitive collection of hard drive data. It has all the information you could possibly want on over 3,400 hard drives, from the early five-meg MFM drives right up to the 2.7-gigabyte SCSI drives.

The list is sorted alphabetically by manufacturer, disk controller type, and then by model number. Just scroll through the list until you locate your hard drive. Next you're given the number of heads, cylinders, sectors, size in megabytes, and so on. This information is especially important if you didn't get a manual with your hard drive.

I've used this list on several occasions, as I'm sure you will too if you do any work on your drives. Martin is continually updating this list, so always look for the latest release.

NE ver 2.03

NE203.ZIP
by GDSOFT

Here's an excellent text editor with all the features found in expensive shareware and commercial programs. The author calls it NE for "No Edlin."

Don't dismiss NE just because it's freeware. It's really a powerful editor with lots of features, including keyboard and mouse controlled pull-down menus for many of the most used options.

For simple operations, this might be all you need. But it also has plenty of Wordstar compatible commands listed in the nine-page documentation. (I suggest you print this out and keep it handy until you get familiar with the commands you'll use the most.)

NE also has a very good hypertext help system. Just hit F1 and click on the topic you want for more information.

The one thing NE doesn't have built in is a spell checker. But it's easy to incorporate any stand-alone checker by simply telling it what to use. There are many commercial and shareware programs fitting the bill, but since we're talking freeware, you'll want to take a look at a more than adequate spell checker by the same company...

GDSPELL ver 2.0a

GDSP20A.ZIP
by GDSOFT

GDSPELL is a freeware ASCII text file spell checker. To use it, all you need to do is run the program with the name of the file you want to check. When it comes upon a word it doesn't recognize, you have the option to look up the correct spelling, edit, skip, or add to the dictionary.

GDSPELL is quite fast because it loads a 10,000-word dictionary of common words into RAM, and has an added 50,000-word dictionary on disk. It also has an auxiliary dictionary that you can build on.

Aside from being fast, GDSPELL is also easy to use, working well with any editor that allows for an add-on spell checker. It's an excellent alternative to high-priced programs.

Following are two updates of programs I have reviewed previously. Both are still useful. Both are still free.

NFX ver 1.30a

NFX130A.ZIP
by Bluewave Software

NFX is about the easiest offline reader you'll find.

All you need to do is load it and select CONFIGURE from the menu.

You'll be asked where your .QWK packets are, where to put .REP files, and what editor to use. Included in the archive is TED.COM, a simple editor. But if you use something else, all you need to do is set the name and path. Now you're ready to read the mail.

After getting back to the main menu, choose SELECT QWK and a list should be displayed (if you set the paths correctly). Highlight the one you want to read and hit Enter. After your packet is uncompressed, you're given three choic-

CONTINUES...

Rusty **Edie**

Dual Eliminator

Rusty n Edie's BBS announces the introduction of their **Dual Eliminator.** Simply plug your phone line to the Dual Eliminator and then plug the Dual Eliminator into your modem. This device consists of 2 passive electronic filters that handle both high and low frequency noise from the phone line. Both high and low frequency are independently adjustable with knobs that mount on the front of the unit. Surge protection is provided by an electronic varistor.

A light emitting diode, also mounted on the front of the unit, glows whenever the device is eliminating noise from the phone lines. This device can solve the majority of noise problems associated with telecommunications today, and is sold with a 30-day, money-back guarantee. They sell for $25 each plus $4 shipping and handling. To order, call Rusty n Edie's at 216-726-4217, fax to 216-726-3595 or call their BBS number 216-726-2620; they will accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express.

Rusty n Edie's BBS
7393 California Ave.
Youngstown, OH 44512

es: MAIL, FILES and NEWS. Choosing FILES will show a new file listing if you toggled that on in the mail Door. NEWS will display the BBS NEWS file. MAIL lists all your personal mail. When there's none to read, just move around the screen and select one of the conferences that has mail, and hit ENTER.

While you're reading mail, several options are available. These include Index, Order, Find, Mark, Save, and Reply, all of which are fairly self-explanatory.

So if you always wanted to get into your favorite BBS's messages bases, NFX will get you off to a good start. It isn't as "full-featured" as some of the others, but it'll do quite well for the beginner. You might even find it becoming all you need.

KILBAK ver 6.0

KILBAK6.ZIP
by John McNamara

If you do any kind of text editing, you'll probably end up with a lot of backup files. They're those pesky *.BAK cluttering up your hard drive.

Every text editor I've seen uses this method, as do many word processors.

KILBAK scans all your drives and will delete any it finds.

If you have a CDROM or other drive that you would rather KILBAK not check, you can use the "SKIP" or "OMIT" options. The default is *.BAK, but you can also have it work on other files with any extension you specify.

This program could save you a lot of disk space—you'd be surprised how much is used up by unnecessary backup files. Just be careful, as this program can be unforgiving.

All of the above programs are freeware. There is no fee for individual use. However, if you do find a freeware program useful, send the author a note letting him or her know.

I always preach that you should look at shareware before paying high prices for commercial programs. Ditto for freeware.

You can call the Freeware Hall of Fame BBS for hundreds of freeware (and shareware) programs. Access, of course, is free. Give them a call 804.293.4710.

If you're a shareware author and would like me to take a look at your program, upload it to Uncle Hank's BBS at 413.527.8977.

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	Synchronet	Wildcat!IM	PCBoard/M	MajorBBS	TBBS
Node license*	$299	$799	$440	$508	$895
Programmable	Yes	No	Extra	Extra	Extra
Multiple command shells	Yes	No	No	No	No
Intelligent DigiBoard	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Int14h device support	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Standard serial ports	Up to 10	No	Up to 4	Up to 2	Up to 2
Caller ID security	Yes	No	Extra	Extra	No
Nested security logic	Yes	No	No	No	No
Multichannel chat	Yes	Extra	Yes	Yes	Yes
Private user chat	Yes	No	Extra	Yes	Yes
Offline reader support	Yes	Yes	Extra	Yes	Extra
QWK networking	Yes	Yes	Extra	No	Yes
FidoNet import/export	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PostLink (RIME) support	Yes	Extra	Yes	Extra	No
Includes RIPscrip menus	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
Novell/DOS LAN support	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Enhanced CD-ROM support	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Incoming FAX support	Yes	No	No	No	No
Chat between doors	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Bidirectional file transfers	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
DOS door support	11 types	2 types	2 types	No	No
FILE_ID.DIZ support	Yes	Extra	Yes	Yes	No
Offline NetMail	Yes	Yes	Extra	No	Yes
Offline/Remote file requests	Yes	No	No	No	No
Real-time configuration	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

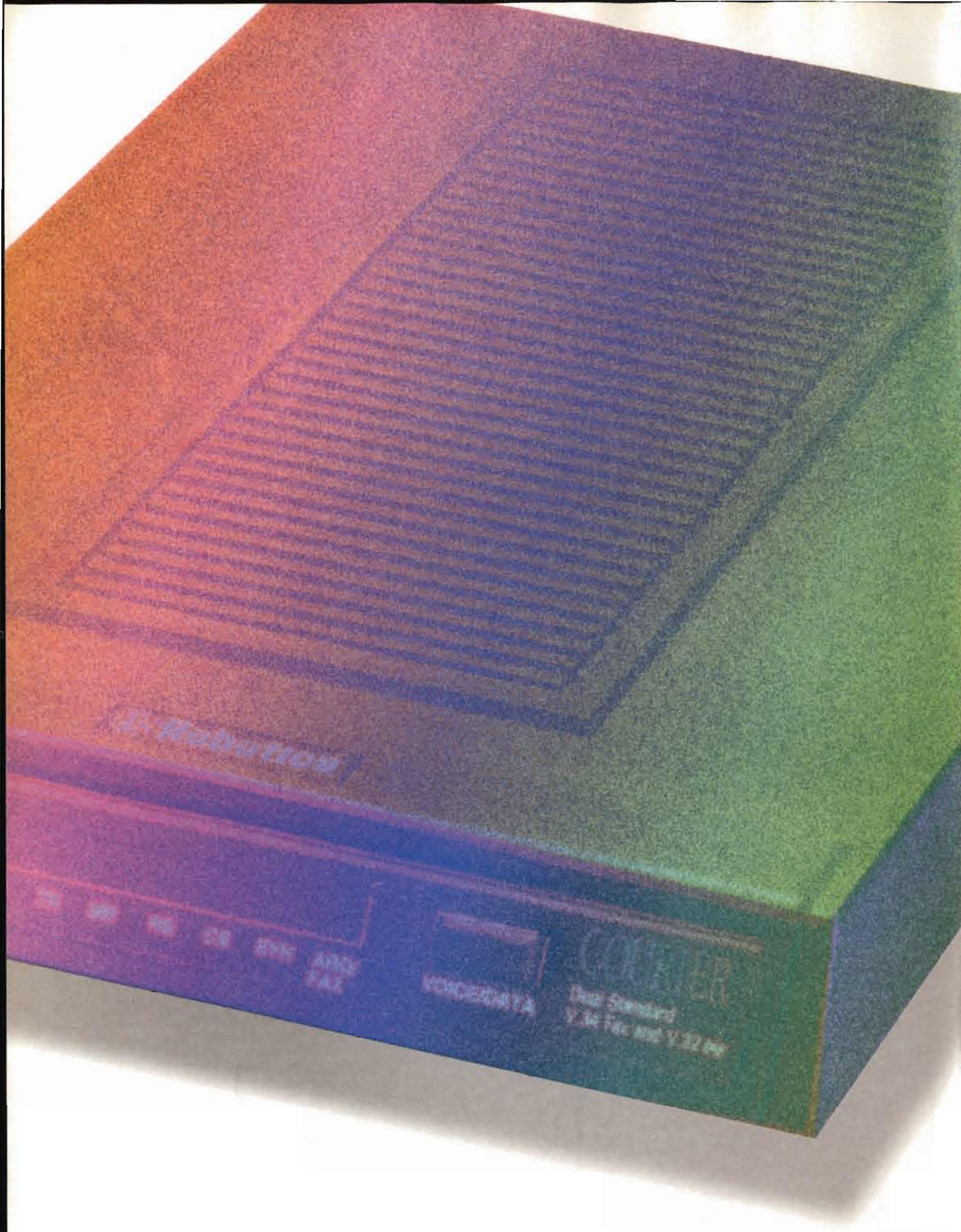
Features and prices compiled from vendor supplied information 2/94, are subject to change without notification. Wildcat!IM, PCBoard/M, MajorBBS, TBBS, QWK, FidoNet, PostLink, RIME, RIPscrip, Novell, and DOS are trademarks or their respective companies. Third party utilities may be required for some message network technologies.
* for 8 nodes Wildcat!/IM requires a 250 node license, PCBoard/M requires a 10 node license, TBBS requires a 16 node license.

If you haven't checked out Synchronet yet, crank up your modem and download a demo. There isn't a faster, more feature rich BBS available anywhere from anyone. Synchronet combines the robust interactive nature of a multiuser BBS with the speed, power and flexibility of a multinode system.

It was innovative out-of-the-box features such as intelligent variable timeslicing, ARS™ security, RIPscrip, enhanced CD-ROM, and easy to use fully integrated message network support that made Synchronet a multinode powerhouse. And now, with version 2.0, custom programmability, lightning fast high volume messaging, and much more makes Synchronet *the* sysop's choice for BBSing in the 90's.

Synchronet BBS version 2

Multinode Bulletin Board System Software



BY MODEM MAGE

Digicom's Connection 288DF

Is 'SoftModem Technology' for you?

The Modem Mage seldom changes the course of time, but I felt it necessary to alter events just a bit this month. I had formerly promised to dive into some performance issues, but recently received some information that might prove as enlightening as anything you've read recently.

Digicom Systems Inc. (now owned by those Sound Blaster folks, Creative Labs Inc.) recently announced their new Connection 288DF, a 28.8K internal PC data/fax modem. When it finally releases (scheduled for May 1995) it will represent Digicom's first foray into the 28.8K data arena and will be based on their proprietary "SoftModem Technology".

At first glance this modem and its technology seem appealing; however, after picking the minds of folks involved in the marketing and support of this and existing Digicom products, I have some points you should remember when considering this modem in your BBS or other online plans.

The 288DF uses a new breed of DSP (Digital Signal Processor), otherwise known as a "datapump." This architecture does away with the integrated DSP and Supervisor (controller) technology seen in other modems. The code for the modem resides not in the modem itself but instead on your local PC storage device. Hmmm... if my HD crashes my modem is brain-dead?

CONTINUES...

TABLE I — SYSOPS HIGH-SPEED MODEM DISCOUNTS BY VENDOR AND MODEL TYPE

VENDOR/ PRODUCT	14.4K V.32bis INTERNAL	14.4K V.32bis EXTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC, V.34 INTERNAL	V.32TERBO, V.FC V.34 EXTERNAL
AT&T Paradyne	3721-B1-001* $160	3710-A1-201* $180 PC; $190 Mac	N/A	N/A
CPI/ ViVa	ViVa 14.4 $180	ViVa 14.4 $196	N/A	N/A
Hayes Corp	Optima 144B* $179	Ultra 144 $249	N/A	Optima 288+FAX v.FC 28.8k $288
		Optima 144+FAX* $179 PC; $179 Mac		
Intel	SatisFax/400 $249	14.4 EX $269	N/A	N/A
	Faxmodem 144i $99	SatisFAX/400e* $245		
		Faxmodem 144e $109		
Microcom	N/A	N/A	N/A	DeskPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k $249
				TravelPorte FAST v.FC 28.8k $249
MultiTech	MT1432BC $400	MT1432BA* $400	N/A	N/A
	MT1432ES $400 MCA	MT1432MU* $300		
		MT1432BL* $450		
		MT1432PCS $575		
Practical Peripherals	N/A	PM14400FXSA* $215	N/A	N/A
		PM14400FXMT* $155		
Supra Corp	SupraFAXModem* $129	SupraFAXModem* $149	N/A	Supra V.FC 28k $169
USRobotics	N/A	N/A	N/A	HST V.Everything V.34, VFC, FAX* $249
Ven-Tel	PCM144FAX* $195	EC144FAX* $215	N/A	N/A
	PCMV.32bis* $480	ECV.32bis* $525		
	MCM144FAX* $380 MCA	RMV.32bis II* $425		
Zoom Telephonics	VFP V.32Bis* $99	VFX V.32Bis* $119 PC; $130 Mac	VFP V.FC 24k $99	VFX V.FC 24k $119 PC; $130 Mac
			VFP V.FC 28.8k $139	VFX V.FC 28.8k $159 PC; $170 Mac
ZyXEL	U-1496B* 16.8K $299	U-1496E* 16.8K $299	N/A	U-1496E* v.32terbo 16.8K $299
	U-1496B+* 19.2K $389			

* Modems with an asterisk include 14,400 baud FAX send/receive at no extra charge!

Notes on Table I:

1. All internal modems are assumed to be PC-AT ISA bus unless otherwise noted. Some manufacturers do not offer internals; be careful when ordering.
2. Consult manufacturer for details on availability of Caller ID or voice-mail processing options (any modem above).
3. These prices NEVER include shipping and handling, which is always extra, Ttypically $5 - $15 U.S. dollars.
4. V.34 is International (ITU-T) standard for 28.8K. This is not the same as V.FAST (generic name) or V.FC (Rockwell based 28.8K standard).

Each time you bring up your telecomm software or BBS you must also load a DOS- or Windows- based driver which first loads the code to the modem. Without these drivers your modem is a bare DSP, all dressed up with no place to go.

Since this data transfer is via the ASIC and not the DTE, load time is quoted as 100 msec. Sounds familiar—I used to brag to the other mages that I could ride a rogue dragon for 100 milliseconds... never made it past 50 milliseconds! My point is, beware of performance quotes before the product even ships.

Also note that since this is an internal PC product, it is not a viable option for Amiga, Mac, or other non-PC based systems. Conceptually, this is a very slick technology. It is similar to FLASHROM-based modems such as Multitech or USRobotics in that all code can be updated via a file transfer from a BBS or online service. Supra offers FLASHROM, too, but only for its supervisor (their datapump is Rockwell-based and therefore not flash upgradable). Digicom offers free software updates via America Online.

The 288DF can be configured either as a data or fax modem, but requires front-end software to distinguish what type of call is coming in. The appropriate modem code is then loaded, enabling fax or data, allowing the modem to continue with the connection. It will also be upgradable to Voice Messaging.

Digicom also tries to play the Mage's game—foreseeing the future. They plan on selling feature updates for this modem including Caller ID and Voice View protocol. While they predict these features coming some day, I was unable to get them to point to a date on a calendar.

Some of the standard specifications of the 288DF seem a bit limiting, but perhaps the actual release will remedy them. Supported IRQs are 3,4,5,9... not the more standard 3,4,5,7. Com ports supported are 1-4.

V.34 rates supported are 28,800, 26,400, 24,000, 21,600, 19,200, and 14,400.

The ITU V.34 spec does go much lower for V.34, so this may be an oversight on somebody's part. Also missing

CONTINUES...

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from fax is Class 2 or the ITU Class 2.0 standard. It does support V.17, V.29 and V.27 send and receive Group 3 Class 1 fax standards. For error correction and compression support, it offers V42 and MNP.

Of particular interest to this old-timer will be performance at 28,800 under compressed-file, bi-directional transfers. Few tests really show modem horse-power like bi-directional transfers of the ITU-T (#.TST) standards files.

As this is new DSP technology, the performance aspects of the 288DF will be under severe scrutiny. This alone could make or break the future of this new breed of modem.

For some, the Digicom 288 DF could be the perfect solution. I see this modem as a real contender for the low-end modem market where prices are plummeting. For the power user or sysop, this modem will not likely be the product of choice. We'll certainly find out in the months to come.

One quick note: I was pleased at the response time to Digicom's technical support voice line. While it was on my dime, the call was answered in under four minutes. The representative was knowledgeable and tried to be as helpful as possible. He didn't even snicker at my name!

He did seem a little perplexed that their sales literature indicated the modem was available, as he was quoting a ship date in late May. Digicom offers support via their own BBS and AOL, but surprisingly lacked any Internet or CompuServe support options.

You can reach Digicom's sales department at 408.262.1277, and technical support at 408.934.1601.

Sysop/Provider programs

I've included a couple of basic charts to help those who believe a picture (well, chart) is worth a page or two of rambling text.

The minimum performance level is v.32bis (14,400 bps). but will soon be displaced by V.34. All modems also must have v.42bis for error correction and data compression to make this list. The rightmost column of Table I shows all modems faster than 14400 bps that support at least v.32bis standards.

I recommend only V.34 for sysops. End-users can economically afford to now live by the same standards. The V.34 ITU-T standard offers 50 percent more throughput than v.32bis, at only minimal cost increases. It also offers a better chance at a high-speed connect (24,000–28,800) than VFC under minimal line conditions. Beware of upgrade plans to v.FAST/v.34 modems, as various manufacturer programs vary greatly.

More than a modem

Some vendors offer more than just modems to the sysops joining their program. For example, US Robotics offers substantial discounts off their CommServer 486 LAN product. Other vendors, such as ZyXel, offer big discounts on modem rackmounts. A rackmount reduces the tangle of multiplying power supplies and becomes economical for sysops planning on larger, multi-line systems.

Buyers' restrictions

If you maintain a system operating 24-hours per day for the last six months,

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TABLE II — VENDOR CONTACT INFORMATION

VENDOR NAME	CALL THEIR BBS AT THIS NUMBER AND...	...DOWNLOAD THIS FILE.	IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS CALL..	CONTACT VIA EMAIL
AT&T Paradyne	(813) 532-5254	ATTSYSOP.TXT	(800) 554-4996	t.bradshaw@paradyne.com
CPI/ViVa	(805) 499-9646; (215) 746-9948	CPIA.TXT	(800) 854-7600	
Hayes Corp.	(404) 446-6336; (800) USHAYES	H96SYSOP.TXT	(404) 840-9200	rlacy@hayes.com
Intel	(503) 645-6275	OFFER.TXT	(503) 228-9707	
Microcom	(800) 822-8224	SYSOP.TXT	(617) 762-5134	
MultiTech	(612) 785-9875; (800) 392-2432	PRICE.TXT	(612) 785-3500	
Pract. Per.	(805) 496-4445	SYSBBS.TXT	(805) 497-4774	GO PPIFORUM (CompuServe)
Supra Corp.	(503) 967-2444	SYSOP.TXT	(503) 967-2400	supra@supra.com
USRobotics	(708) 982-5092	SYSDEAL.TXT	(708) 982-5151 (800) 550-7800	support@usr.com CIS 76711,707
Ven-Tel	(408) 922-0988	SYSDEAL.TXT	(408) 436-7400	
Zoom Teleph.	(617) 423-3733	ZOOMBBS.ZIP	(800) 666-6191 (617) 423-1072	CIS 71333,1527
ZyXEL	(714) 693-0762	ZYXEL.TXT	(714) 693-0804	sales@zyxel.com

then you're eligible for any of these discounts. Some manufacturers only require that you are currently running a BBS at time of ordering. A few may actually waive the current operating requirement.

Once you receive your modem, you're expected to keep the BBS up and running between six and 12 months (requirements vary). Generally, the modem is yours to do whatever you want with after this period expires. Some manufacturers may ask you to never sell modems purchased on a discount plan. Modem resellers, such as computer stores, are generally excluded from participation in discount plans.

Nearly all of the modem vendors are accepting VISA and MasterCard for orders. Some also accept a cashier's check or money-order for prepay orders. Personal checks often require additional clearing time which just holds up your order. C.O.D. is becoming less common, and is rumored for phase-out by several of the larger players over the next few months.

One requirement, which goes for nearly all vendors, is that they generally expect at least a one-line advertisement somewhere in your welcoming screens. For example: "Using the finest Model XYZ modem from Acme Modem Co." would be perfectly acceptable in all cases.

Order processing and availability

Delivery times and schedules vary radically, so your mileage may vary. Many manufacturers are placing orders on hold until they release V.34. Hayes typically shipped in 48 hours, and to the far extreme, US Robotics guarantees a two to six week waiting period.

For Canadian, European and other sysops outside the U.S., you may or may not be eligible for discount offers. Please check carefully ahead of time to avoid disappointment. You may want to check with their European subsidiaries before contacting the U.S. office. ▪▪▪▪

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http://www.cl.ais.net:80/~modemmag/
This is for the Mage's World Wide Web page.

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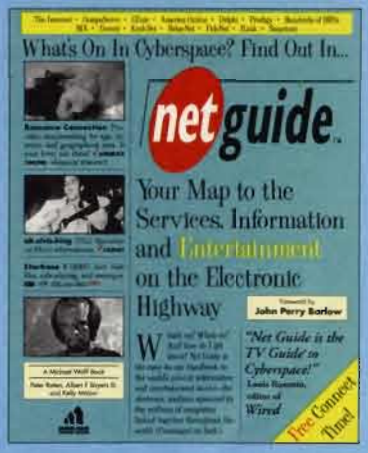
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John Perry Barlow
"Net Guide is the TV Guide to Cyberspace!"
Louis Rossetto, editor of Wired
Free, Connect, Tuned

It's 1954 and your family has just bought a television set! Along with millions of others up and down Maple Street you want to know one thing: *what's on?* Now that same question echoes out in Cyberspace. As the Net becomes an entertainment as well as an information medium, a program guide becomes an essential tool and a must-have part of the experience. That guide is the bestselling book *Net Guide*—"The TV Guide to Cyberspace!" according to *Wired* Editor Louis Rossetto. "The book people keep stealing off my desk," says *Time*'s Joshua Quittner.

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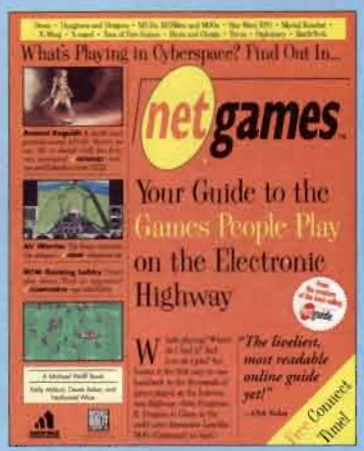
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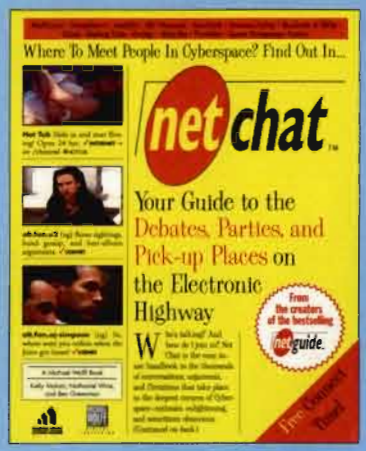
Where To Meet People In Cyberspace? Find Out In...
netchat
Your Guide to the Debates, Parties, and Pick-up Places on the Electronic Highway
From the creators of the bestselling netguide
Free, Connect, Tuned

But that's not all! As Cyberspace grows exponentially, whole new obsessions and passions are born. Thousands of games are suddenly available online and so now there's *Net Games*—your "map to the playing fields of Netdom," says *Newsweek*—and with millions of conversations to join in Cyberspace, you'll need *Net Chat*, "The best surfer's guide out there," writes *Entertainment Weekly*. Every other month, there's a new Cyber-baedeker attracting what the *Wall Street Journal* calls "a wide and devoted readership." This month there's *Net Money*, here to tell you how the online world can make your life easier and richer! And if you really want to visit the final, final frontier, you'll need *Net Trek*—truly the ultimate guide! And watch for *Net Sports*, *Net Tech*, and *Net Music*, all coming in 1995! In bookstores everywhere!

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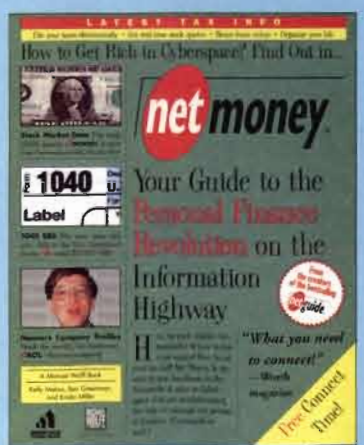
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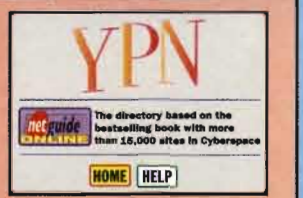

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The A-List

Following is the first installment of the official Annotated BBS Magazine List — The A-List*. The bulletin boards on The A-List are corralled by longtime BBS-watcher Bob Breedlove, and will be appearing in this annotated format in BBS Magazine exclusively.

Each month we'll bring you only the freshest sampling of boards from across the country and around the world, with contributed descriptions of what each has in store. (Check the legend for important decoding information.)

If you're a sysop and would like to be considered for the list, contact one of the following sites:

BOBsBBS — 916.929.7511

FTP — Download USPUB103.ZIP from oak.oakland.edu, create USBBS.DAT and send the completed file to BOBsBBS or update@bobsbbs.uucp.netcom.com.

Call 609.953.9110 (voice) for help.

**Derived from the USBBSLIST.*

LEGEND

BBS TYPE	BAUD	MODULATION	SIZE	NODES	SUBSCRIPTION	INTERNET FEAT.
B	29	D	50+	3	$	3

BBS TYPE
A = Auntie
B = PCBoard
C = Phoenix/Collie/Collosus
D = dBBS
F = Spitfire
G = GAP
H = PC-Host
I = TriBBS
J = SuperBBS
L = Telegard
M = OraComm/Major/Galacticomm
N = Genesis Deluxe
O = Opus/Maximus
P = GT PowerComm
Q = QuickBBS/RemoteAccess
R = RBBS
S = Searchlight
T = TBBS or TCOMM
U = UltraBBS
V = WWIV
W = Wildcat
X = BBS-PC, RyBBS, ROS, Fido, Citadel, Osiris, etc. or custom, unverified or unknown type
Y = T.A.G.
Z = TPBoard

BAUD
0 = 300
1 = 1200
2 = 2400
9 = 9600 or faster

MODULATION TYPE
V = V.32 or V.32bis
U = USRobotics HST
H = Hayes VSM
F = V.Fast, V.34 (1/25/95)
O = Other proprietary method
D = USRobotics Dual Standard (V32 and HST)
B = Hayes Ultra (V32 and VSM)

SIZE
Indicated in 100s of megs.
+ = CD-ROM.

NODES
Number of lines

SUBSCRIPTION
$ = subscription; blank = FREE

INTERNET FEATURES

SERVICES	CODE 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D	E	F
Mail	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Usenet	XX		XX		XX		XX								
FTP		XXXX						XXXX							
Telnet								XXXXXXXX							

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Must support 2400 bps or greater
100 MB of disk capacity
24hr/7 day service
Sysop must give REAL NAME

201-481-4108 NJ Newark
KA2HHB HAM BBS Ruben Echevarri
Ham Radio/UFO/Wildcat 3rd Party/ games/utilities. Online ham call lookup/online scanner freq. database.
W 19 V 10+ 1

201-585-0957 NJ Fort Lee
Phantom David Hathaway
Anarchy, the obscure. Fidonet, Freedom Net HUB, TradeWars and other door games, H/P/A texts and files, uncensored messaging.
B 29 VO 2 1

201-633-9346 NJ Paterson
First Class Timothy Chin
Fidonet. Over 150 Conferences, CD-ROM online with over 11,000 files. Wildnet HUB.
W 29 FV 14+ 2

201-635-5726 NJ Chatham
The Machine Rob Knierim
Games and chat. ChatLink Nationwide chat, multiplayer games, technical support info, Majornet, other echoes.
M 19 V 50+ 8 $ 2

201-659-8032 NJ Hoboken
Vital COM BBS Jose Negron, Jr
Electronics, programming, games.
F 29 VF 1 1

201-729-2602
Chuck's Attempt Chuck Ammann

201-731-6416 NJ West Orange
Get A Life! Marc Gaylen
All adult BBS specializing in adult graphics & games, thousands of files & all lifestyles.
F 29 VF 60+ 3

201-941-7778 NJ Ridgefield
rockpile.com Tom Heffernan
Multi user chat and games: Gopher, Archie, IRC, FTP, Telnet, Rlogin, Finger, SLIP, Fidonet, MajorNet, Internet, NetAccess forums and chat.
M 19 DF 5+ 12 $ F

203-227-8975 CT Westport
The Edge Nick Bath
Files and door games. ANSI graphics.
O 29 FV 13+ 1

203-228-9814 CT Hebron
CyberiaSystems Nathan McMullen
IBM compatibles, utilities, games, Fido messaging echoes, Fidonet, Ravenet, DPUnet, and COMMNet networks.
X 29 VO 4 1

203-250-0938 CT Cheshire
OPAL Network John McCaffrey
Scientific, education, games.
X 09 D 18 2

203-257-1960 CT Wethersfield
Libertarian Jim Hock
Politics, Hartford area issues.
Y 19 V 5 1

203-264-9482 CT Southbury
EmrgncyMedical Tom Patierno
Emergency Medical Services / IBM compatible / Fidonet echoes. 425 MB, Renegade, 14400 bps v.32bis Zoom.
X 19 V 4 2

203-269-2843 CT Wallingford
Prime Conxtion John Lappie
Shareware, 7 CD's online. Multi-line chat, Internet email.
W 19 FV 12+ 3 1

203-429-6338 CT Storrs
The Pink Rose Michele Dalene
Fidonet, general IBM interest. 280 MB online. SEMS MAIL HUB.
Q 19 VO 3 1

203-488-2315 CT No. Branford
Interstate BBS Lewis Reid
General interest. Fidonet. IBM, Renegade BBS software. 700 MB online, member of CT_BBSADS Bulletin Board Listings Conference.
X 19 VO 7 1

203-651-9730 CT Simsbury
CyberConnectn Chad Thompson
COMMNet and FIDONET. IBM files and messages. Renegade. COMMNET and FIDONET message areas. v.32bis/ v.42bis MNP. Member of CT_BBSADS.
X 19 VO 3 1

203-744-0179 CT Danbury
Hatters Park Bill Hausler
Support areas for AIDS/alcoholism/ religion. PODSNET and FIDONET hub, 250 MB online. Great msg. areas and file areas, Internet email online.
O 19 V 2 1 1

205-478-8599 NY Glens Falls
The Thing Dave Jaswaye
Games.
W 09 V 4 1

205-665-7924 AL Montevallo
Pirate's Cove James Acker
General purpose board, online games.
X 19 D 7+ 1 3

206-584-4309
The Wolf's Den Keith Shinkle

206-747-6397 WA Bellevue
SEANEWS Bill McCormick
Free Usenet/Internet access. Free access to Usenet, email, and other Internet services.
X 09 FO 34+ 3 B

207-764-0788 ME Mapleton
Vacation Land Darcy Lovley
User based. 6 CD's, 120 online games.
B 09 V 10+ 1 1

207-777-3465 ME Auburn
L/A Blues Jon Meier
MS-DOS and Mac files, door games. Internet mailer.
R 09 V 20+ 2 3

207-777-5085 ME Auburn
High Five Jim Hart
Community network.
X 19 V 250 1 3

207-797-9177 ME Falmouth
Warp Zone BBS Russ Darling
Business oriented. Fidonet, Internet email and Usenet newsgroups.
B 29 D 2 1 $ 3

208-529-1904 ID Shelley
Modem Mania Eli Searle
Files, CD-ROMS, Internet Mail
Wide variety of files. Searchlight BBS software 4.0a.
S 09 FV 14+ 2 $ 1

208-664-2983
The Third Mill Jim Fromm

209-255-9110 CA Fresno
Program World Scott Smith
Programming, automotive information, code generators. 30 programming netted subs, home of VBBS Auto Info. Sub. Home of VBBS Qbasic Sub.
X 19 V 1+ 1

209-323-7583 CA Clovis
Clovis Connect Rod Jessen
OS/2, 10 Shareware CDs, AIDS support. Fido, AEGIS, OS2NET, IBMNET, RBBSNET, IGANET.
W 29 FV 14+ 3

209-339-0220 CA Lodi
STARBASE BBS Dave Tracewell
Scouting, genealogy, & astronomy. Family Oriented BBS. 2 CD's Online. Fidonet, ScoutNet, Internet.
W 19 FB 11+ 1 3

210-656-0109 TX San Antonio
Neon Jungle Amy Moody
Family oriented, something for everyone. Fidonet. Help for the novice BBS caller, over 100 Fido echo areas.
B 19 D 12+ 2

210-734-9141 TX San Antonio
S.A. ONLINE John Spofford
Business-related. Real estate, international trade. Free Trade News electronic edition, bus. directories, class. ads. Jobs from around the country.
T 19 BV 4 4 $

212-627-0531 NY New York
FPX2 Kevin Freeman
New user support. Online fun and tech support. Fido, RIME, ThrobNet, P&BNet Internet (fpx2.com), games, off-line mail & much more.
O 19 FD 40 2 $ 3

212-749-3268
Walter's BBS Walter Parrish

212-989-8411 NY New York
Echo Stacy Horn
General conferencing. Mosaic, WWW, and paper, MS, and High Times magazines on line.
X 09 FV 50 50 $ F

213-225-5474 CA Los Angeles
ThunderVolts 16 Harvey Wolen
Engineering, business, administrative. EchoMail, games. Member ASP. ASP CD ROM online.
W 29 V 0 0

213-771-7515 CA W. Hollywood
Heaven West BB Mike Sulewski
Gay and lesbian community contact and outreach. Matchmaker, classifieds, International Net, shareware files. AIDS info, 12-Step support, CHAT.
M 19 D 20+ 16 $

214-235-5288 TX Richardson
Lunatic Fringe John Stewart
The latest in offline mail related files and utilities. 30 days full access FREE to first time callers. PlanoNet. 22 different echomail networks. 28.8 bd node.
B 29 D 35 3 $ 3

214-245-9315
USS Inverness Jonathan McGirr

214-351-9859
Collector's Edition Len Hult

214-355-1835
Lonesome Dove Matthew Peacock

216-296-2244 OH Ravenna
Blue Parrot Joe Rinehart
CD-ROM support, Internet email, news.
B 09 V 12 2 3

216-296-7016 OH Ravenna
Groucho's Grot D. Beyers
3 CD-ROMS online at all times. Free access first call. 40+ games, 50+ message areas, 20+ file areas.
V 09 V 14+ 1 3

216-324-6410
Comm_Netlink Kassie Stevenson

216-349-8698 OH SOLON
ALLEN TELECOM Marv Grossman
Business-related. Bulletins, programs and patterns for antenna plotting.
B 19 B 5 2

216-381-3320
PC Dhio Norm Henke

216-398-7275 OH Cleveland
TIMS Machine Tim Holt
SWAP-N-SHOP.
B 19 BV 1 1

216-639-9508
Scientist's BBS Soo Kurz

216-830-4657 OH Massillon
Radio KADS Kevin Amstutz
Conversation. Interesting text files. Picture file library. Fidonet.
X 09 V 1 1

216-868-7627 OH Minerva
StarNet I.D.G. D. Morton
Internet Development Group tech. support & general interest.
W 29 BV 14+ 4 $ 3

217-359-0436 IL Champaign
DataQuest Melvin Stevens
Entertainment, 4-player Doom & Heretic and other interactive games & teleconferencing.
M 29 D 120+ 4

217-423-7430 IL Decatur
STARFLEET HQ's Terry Ortman
Star Trek theme, Trek Trivia games. online shopping, online doors, home of Starfleet Net.
I 09 FV 10+ 1

219-325-3655 IN La Porte
Rob's Arcade Rob Swanson
Files 7 CDs online, 4 mail nets, doors.
B 19 VF 61+ 1

219-563-1738 IN Wabash
Wabash Norm Benjamin
Computer user support.
B 19 V 9+ 1

219-744-4908
The Play Board Jay Tipton

301-495-2774 MD Silver Sprin
Desolation Row Don Blackford
An offshoot of Outsider's BBS. Also located on Highway 61.
X 19 V 1 1

301-587-2277 MD SilverSpring
Deaf New World Ken Glickman
Entertainment, investment, special communications needs. 175+ conferences, 35+ doors, stock quotes by automatic email. Live chat.
W 09 V 15+ 5 $ 7

301-587-5922 MD Takoma Park
Dutsider's Don Blackford
Social engineering, Discordian/ Buddhist slant, tolerant.
X 19 V 5 2

301-596-7693 MD Columbia
Prog. Corner Gary Smith
Programming source code, tools for programmers. Huge collection of files, easy access to the Internet. All 15 lines support V.34 28.8K connects.
X 29 FD 75+ 15 F

301-834-5110 MD Knoxville
SierraClubInMd E Whitenton
Environmental & local issues / Frederick, Washington, Carrol Co. Government Data Finder System.
W 09 V 1 1

301-840-8998 MD Gaithersburg
Route 66 Bill Johns
General, games, cars, Internet, Windows.
X 29 V 150+ 2 1

301-916-0991 MD Germatown
Staging Lanes Eric Cary
Drag racing, RBBS-PC, small businesses. Where drag racing fans and drivers can interact, startup businesses can network and advertise.
R 19 BV 3 1

301-949-1927
First Due Francis Fowler

301-963-4453
Shareware Expr Shawn Bogardus

303-244-8420
Mirror Image BBS Mark Feil

303-932-1308 CO Morrison
EDTD BBS Caetal Teneiaeh
Philosophy, art, RPG's, graphics, sound, emerging technology. 5 lines all 28800bps, v.34, v.FC, HST, v.32ter, v.32bis, v.32.
M 09 DF 21+ 5

304-727-6733 WV St. Albans
Blue Powder Greg Hively
Support system for Apogee, id, Impulse, & ARJ. RAH distrib.
B 29 V 7 1

304-728-0884 WV Charles Town
The Bit Bank J. Willingham
Full-featured. Fresh files, game & utility doors, Fidonet & PCLink networks, Internet mail, easy to navigate.
Q 19 FV 7 1 1

305-388-3456 FL Miami
Fencer's BBS Frets Olivares
Fencing-related and general. QWK packet, chat section, doors games.
X 19 O 4 2 $

305-669-1295 FL Miami
Tropical BBS Rob Joseph
Internet, Fidonet, Codersnet, files, chat, excitement.
W 29 F 13 3 3

305-792-8491 FL FtLauderdale
Infinite Drkns Mitchel Waas
Freedom of speech, intelligence, politics, music, culture. If knowledge is power, get ready for megalomania. Dedicated to free expression and information interchange.
L 19 DF 85+ 6 3

307-674-7329 WY Sheridan
BBSBIGHORN Mike Donohue
Property search with color pictures and Internet email for $10/month or $25/3-months. 900 TABS, unlimited send/receive.
T 09 VF 13 8 $ 7

309-792-2663 IL Silvis
Ancient Marner Michael Castro
MS-DOS shareware, game doors Fidonet 1:232/19. Mailer to Internet gateway. All files freq'able. Request alias files.
F 29 V 14+ 2 1

309-862-4108 IL Normal
Alpha Omega Len Badenhorst
Family / religion oriented, games, online store.
W 19 V 10+ 1

310-515-3673 CA Torrance
PC Heaven BBS Tony Reeves
Ham related, general, online games. For hams, the US and Canadian callbook is online for use; also lots of games and Fido message areas.
S 19 D 10+ 1

310-545-5611 CA ManhattanBch
Ursa Major BBS Scott Robb
General interest, science, astronomy, UFO, para-normal. Large collection of files and messages on a wide and diverse range of subjects.
W 19 DF 38 3 3

310-598-8460 CA Long Beach
Appian Way BBS Mark E. Johnson
Philosophy, current events, religion, TWINS. User-friendly and professionally run board. USA Today, PCM Magazine, government access information and help.
T 99 FU 14 4 $ 7

310-827-8171 CA Los Angeles
LACS BBS Fran Ames
Los Angeles Computer Society, IBM users group.
W 99 V 11 2

310-835-4800 CA San Pedro
AuSSie BBS M.Szabados
Games, chat, files. Play Tradewars with up to 18 users at once.
M 09 V 100+ 18 $ 3

312-248-0900 IL Chicago
Chi Compu Soc Irwin Romanek
PC User Group open to all beginners and the general public. Focus is helping computer novices. Society Memb. $40.
W 29 DF 8 8 3

312-284-7133
4th Dimension Jeff Jones

312-419-3453 IL Chicago
The Little BBS Jose A. Lopez
Business related and games. This is a bbs for all, from games for the kids to business software and closing stock/commodities quotes for adults.
F 29 BD 4 2

313-963-2666 MI Detroit
The TAXI STAND Dan Groske
9 CDROMS online. 70,000+ Files. FidoNet, 150+Bases. Synchronet BBS Support, Synchronet software available online. No fees. No ratios. Type Guest for limited 1st call access
X 19 FV 14+ 4

314-281-8598
Megabiter II George Belcher

314-351-7150
The STL CATII David Russo

314-443-1874 MO Columbia
The IWLA 2X4 Kim Palmer
RTKBA and gun related issues, NRA, IWLA, education, files. All of the profit press releases of the MEGA-COs. Megadoor and hypersearch online to all CD-ROM Drives.
X 09 D 100+ 2

314-481-7600 MO St. Louis
The GrapeVine Graham Bloy
Games, tech advice, shareware, communications, fun topics. Special attention to learning/teaching. Since 1982.
W 19 V 2 2

315-458-3482
Dreamscape Scott Brennan

316-264-7857 KS Wichita
BJ'S M. Littlejohn
Games and game related files for adults only. This board originated in California and was recently moved to Kansas. Free access with comment.
W 29 D 2 1

316-788-7520
Griswold's Priv Jim Kelland

318-862-3100 LA Shreveport
PCA BBS J. Kinney
MSDOS/MS Windows/Novell/Unix 150+ download areas.
W 19 V 70 8 $

334-335-3968 AL Luverne
Crenshaw BBS Ed Welch
New user board for the general user. Non-high-tech. Free Internet access. Large general interest selection of zip files. Game doors. Free-board. New users welcome.
B 29 FV 15 2 1

334-675-8406 AL Saraland
Anchor Inn Jim Wilson
Files, Fidonet.
B 29 V 6 1

360-263-1117 WA La Center
CountryComputng Keith Buckbee
Files 160,000 with 18 CD-ROMS online at all times.
G 29 F 14 0 $

360-493-6881 WA Olympia
Worldview BBS Tomas Hood
Home based resources (business, education, etc.). Content oriented. Community support resources.
B 09 D 40+ 2 $ 3

401-848-9069 RI Middletown
Terminal Madne Chris Mathis
Totally free multinode system, doors, Internet email and news, CD-ROM, WWIV BBS also running as a door off PCBoard.
B 19 F 11+ 3 3

404-442-6748 GA Woodstock
MAILDROP Gary Sandow
2nd Amendment issues. RTKBA. Users are thoughtful people who discuss computers, politics and other issues.
W 19 V 0 0 1

404-476-7880
The Late Nite BBS Bobby Nowell

404-478-9700
The Night Shift Bill Hardy

404-773-7966
Warp Factor Mark Stewart

404-934-4515 GA Stone Mtn
Flagship Expr Harvey Pierce
Current USBBS listings online, PCBoard utilities, ILink conferences, Planet Connect feed.
B 19 F 91+ 5 $

404-936-0550
Music Connection David Coleman

405-438-2496 OK Cleo Springs
KnightsFortress Alva Kingcade
Business-related, games, Windows, hobbies, etc. Large file base and message base.
X 29 V 2+ 1

405-485-9300 OK Blanchard
Dark Ages BBS Randy Henderson
Lots of files and messages, Fido + 5 other nets. DarkStar software.
X 19 V 11+ 1

405-528-3203 OK Okla. City
The Prophecy Mike White
Renegade software.
X 09 V 4+ 1

405-677-8174 OK Okla. City
DateLine BBS David Ivers
Cool BBS, Call Dr.Death.
X 29 V 14+ 1

405-728-7124
Hotel California Lloyd Lawson

407-687-9355 FL W. Palm Bch
Benjamin Comp John Benjamin
Genealogy, plus Mustang! Software (QModemPro) for sale. Fidonet/ Internet-UseNet/IGA genealogy Net/CardNet/FlyNet. 7 CD's of files, online shopping door.
W 19 D 14+ 2 $ 7

407-859-7428
The Death Star Nicholas Seabury

408-364-2789
PereLine BBS Tom Serface

408-577-0509 CA San Jose
Ground Zero'86 Jerry Hubbard
General interest. Free from the first call. New uploads every day. No ratios Relay Net, Internet coming soon.
B 19 V 9+ 1

408-636-0508 CA Hollister
e.BABYLON albert gabrial
Educational, cultural, social. Assyrian history, language, TV & radio programs, magazines. clubs and churches.
W 19 H 2 1

408-637-5181 CA Hollister
InfiniteVision Steven Arnold
OOS, OS/2 & BBS Related. Night Owl 13 Online, U'NI-net, CatNET, NIGHTnet echo mail. 20+ Doors online, 100's of MB of BBS programs and utils.
B 19 FD 24+ 1

408-654-8911 CA San Jose
EXODUS/BDPASVC Willie Mackey
Afrocentric. BDPANet.
W 19 FV 5 2 3

408-956-7942 CA Milpitas
Bid Source Pearl Regis
Information on construction projects out to bid, bid results and requests for sub bids, also numerous forums.
M 29 V 5 2 $

409-589-3312 TX Bryan
The Hot Spot! Pat Butler
Shareware, games, graphics, Renegade.
X 19 VF 11+ 1

409-769-4249
Wayne's World Wayne Belvin

409-842-3044 TX Beaumont
Triple Threat Mike Chambers
Computer sales, genealogy, sports.
R 99 FO 72+ 1 1

410-273-1311 MD Aberdeen
A.T.W. Thom Hinton
Programming and gaming.
W 99 OV 10+ 2 $

410-730-5624 MD Columbia
MarylandGatewy Paul Bitterli
General purpose.
B 19 U 2 1

412-226-9549 PA Natrona Hts
JABS Talk BBS Todd Simmers
Helping local users with problems, UFO, paranormal, utils.
W 09 VO 20+ 1 3

412-437-4642 PA Uniontown
Vets Benefits D Coughenour
Helping veterans with VA claims and research (free board).
B 29 D 9+ 1

412-567-6782
entertain me bbs!! Shawn Cupec

412-635-0934 PA Pittsburgh
Microtech Jack Lawrence
Windows, OS/2, genealogy. Total of 960 MB of disk space with one CD-ROM drive online. Member of Fidonet, IGANet and OS2Net.
Q 29 V 10+ 1

412-767-7068 PA Pittsburgh
Doberman Gang Tom Bing
Pets, files, games, adult areas. Fireman/EMT echo (FIREWIRE)
One of PA's largest BBSs, 75,000+ files, online chat, dozens of online games, adult areas, message areas.
W 29 D 95+ 5

413-525-2804 MA E.Longmeadow
The Archives M. Muise
Technical, games and much more. Technical support BBS, home of TechNet Email Network.
B 29 FV 20+ 2

413-527-8977
Uncle Hank's BBS Hank Hurteau

414-423-0441 WI Milwaukee
Oig.Data.Exch. Jeff Katerinos
Shareware . Huge CD-ROM collection. Online/adult/Internet/newsgroups. Matchmaker/Timedoor/35 intense online games/much much more.
W 09 D 14+ 2 3

414-654-5878 WI Kenosha
The Psyclone Bill Mattocks
Occult. community-oriented, local issues, PODSnet, adult areas.
T 09 V 14+ 2

414-656-1073 WI Kenosha
PsYcHoTiC Mike Dunnington
Madness, anarchy, T-1 & 56kb connections for sale.
T 99 FV 30+ 16 $ F

414-837-2345 WI Casco
HomeTown BBS Chris Gotstein
Games, news, sports, skiing, software, and Internet. PowerBBS for Windows software. Many games, total Internet access.
X 19 D 10 1 F

continues.

415-961-6911 CA Palo Alto
INTERACT Eric Knight
Entertainment. The Interactive Entertainment System. Instant free access. No time limits. 18 and over only.
T 29 V 5 8

416-770-6917
Platinum Express Glenn Jarvis

417-889-8381 MO Springfield
Hey Bubs House Steve Kelley
File areas, telecommunication issues.
S 09 VF 5 1

419-522-1378 OH Mansfield
Polaris Drew Sprang
Wildcat utilities, general software, adult. 50+ doors, 62,000+ files, 4 CDs on line all the time. Home of ASISTEC Software for Wildcat 4.01 systems.
W 29 V 14+ 1

501-234-5596 AR Magnolia
NOT (the BBS) Trever Brackett
General DOS based, games, sound & graphics. CDROM access, door games, message areas.
W 19 D 14+ 1

501-596-2696 AR Magnolia
the GAMEROOM Bill Norris
Online games. Over 40 online games (puzzles, interactive), messages, files, 4 conferences.
R 29 V 1+ 2

502-339-8978 KY Louisville
Bill Board Bill Phelps
Adult access w/ paid subscription over 18 only, shareware files, online games.
W 09 F 11+ 2 3

502-443-6014
The Data Center Jeff Burton

502-868-9385 KY Georgetown
Thoroughbred G. S. Glass
Two online CD-Roms, tons of online games.
Q 99 BV 4 1

503-393-5580
Chemeketa Bob Hunter

503-741-1091 OR Springfield
The Potential M. Blackwelder
Shareware, adult files, online games.
B 09 FV 62+ 8 3

503-955-1705 OR Grants Pass
The Lost Island Dennis Recla
Desktop publishing, still video, photography and graphics. Large collection of PCX images available for download. Discussions of graphics, photography, and the environment.
W 19 V 9+ 1

504-356-0790
Southern Online Russell Jackson

504-542-9600
Computer Solu Sidney Egnew

504-885-5928 LA New Orleans
Southern Star John Souvestre
Technical, Internet, Fidonet, shareware 22 GB, 13 lines, ASP approved, since 1988. Internet email and news, Fidonet Backbone and Filebone.
T 09 VF 220+ 13 S 3

506-459-0973 NB Fredericton
Omni Net Sean Ryan
Virus utilities, tech support, user support
W 09 V 2 2

508-287-0311 MA Concord
VIDEODROME Michael Lammons
Total movie information. All kinds of movie and movie related information and images including local theatre listings, fanclub info and more.
T 09 D 3 2

508-356-1166 MA Ipswich
Nordic EDMS Dave Patterson
Databases and programming & Windows/OS2. Online shopping. 100's of conferences. Also occult.
B 19 VO 14 1 1

508-456-6881 MA Harvard
Shorty's BBS Justin Seger
15 online door games, 3 echomail conferences, SLS Linux files, Apogee distribution site.
B 09 FV 14+ 1

508-468-9091 MA Hamilton
SYSENGGROUP Mike Riley
ASP approved BBS. Source of support Systems Engineering Group. RIME, FIDO, ASP oriented BBS.
W 99 VF 10+ 2

508-478-0153 MA Milford
Gadge'-Tronics Wayne Anderson
Internet newsgroups, helping new users, files, doors, 6 CD-ROMS, ANSI/ASCII/RIP autodetect, 20000+files online, Internet email, Apogee distrib site.
B 19 OF 60+ 3 $

508-528-2295
Computer Conf. Edward Zdrok

508-686-5994 MA Methuen
GRYPHON's Lair Mike Dube
VNSI tech support, sales, service. 70+ doors, 350+ confs., dist site for Parole, T&J, Apogee. Raffles, lottos, restaurant listings, LORD, USURPER, role playing.
W 29 BF 26 2 2

508-746-6010 MA Plymouth
Adult Hangout Tom Williams
Local access #s in 1510+ cities worldwide.
M 09 DF 160+ 38

508-832-7542 MA Auburn
Info. Society C. Grosvenor
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V 09 FV 24+ 1

508-853-0340
Schunix-Pub UNIX Robert Schultz

508-881-6912 MA Ashland
The IMPosium Micah Imparato
Sports, RPGs, multiuser interactive games, chat. Online RPGs.
M 19 V 14 14 $

509-545-9879 WA Pasco
Sigma Iotia][Del Bice
Files and conferences, RelayNet RIME, Fidonet. No restrictions, no file limits or requirements for download.
R 09 VF 35+ 6

509-735-3710 WA Kennewick
THE SCITEC BBS Ed Haack
Lead-based paint testing, soil testing, EPA issues. SCITEC Corporation's Products (MAP-3, ARM software, etc.).
W 29 V 3 1

509-891-6148
The Moonflower Peter Link

510-689-3256 CA Concord
PDSE East Bay Ron Berg
General discussions, information, files, games.
T 29 D 14+ 2

510-794-9788 CA Fremont
Callisto Tower Gus Damian
General interest, echomail based, programming and tech stuff. Large echomail base with local and out of state nets. OS/2 WARP, lots of files and registered doors.
W 29 V 3+ 1

510-799-2921 CA Hercules
Code 3 Outfitrs Kim Leong
Law enforcement, ham radio, general. WCLawNet Hub, NLEMS, AR-Net, RiderNet. No adult files.
W 19 FD 0 0 3

510-803-5967 CA San Ramon
GrndCntrlStatn Scott Schluer
General files, messages, games. Mature environment, online Tradewars/ LORD competitions.
X 29 V 20+ 2

512-836-4262
The Night Owl II Danny Dyess

512-850-8255 TX Corpus Chris
C.C. ONLINE John Spofford
Business-related, jobs, real estate, international trade. Free Trade News electronic edition, business directories, class. ads, jobs from around the world.
T 29 BV 2 4 $

512-945-9304
Ranch House BBS Larry Easley

513-274-7029 OH Dayton
Access-Dayton Dave Hamilton
High quality graphic images, tech info, support for networks.
W 99 D 91+ 3

513-563-2560 OH Cincinnati
B.P.'s Domain Bryan Pendleton
Music and teen.
P 19 V 2 1 3

513-751-7515 OH Cincinnati
NerveNet A.Vandenberg
Techno, Hack, Virii, Ufo, Magick, misc. info, Metaphysics. Free access/downloads on first call, helpful sysop, offers XXX (registered), Cinti.Alternative IS.
W 29 D 14+ 1 3

513-848-4288 OH Dayton
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W 09 FO 10+ 1 5

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W 19 DF 12 2 3

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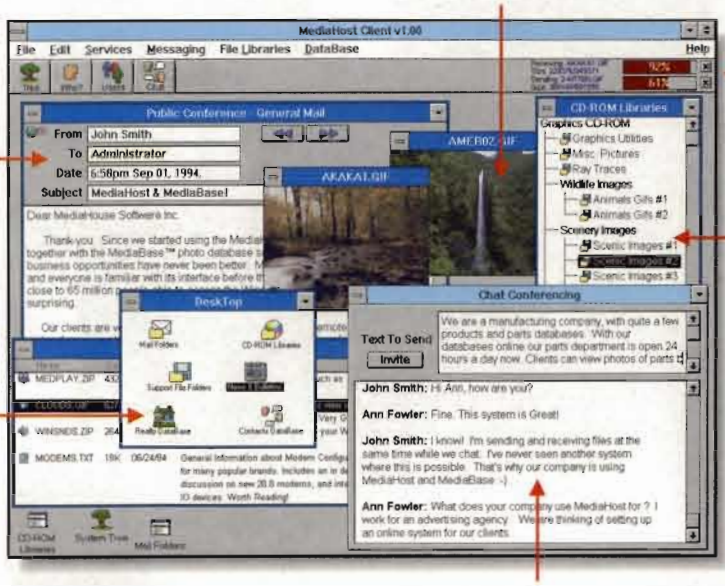
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Ray Traces
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Scenic Images #1
Scenic Images #2
Scenic Images #3
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John Smith: I know! I'm sending and receiving files at the same time while we chat. I've never seen another system where this is possible. That's why our company is using MediaHost and MediaBase :-)
Ann Fowler: What does your company use MediaHost for ? I work for an advertising agency. We are thinking of setting up an online system for our clients.

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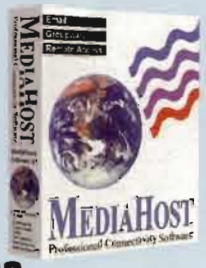

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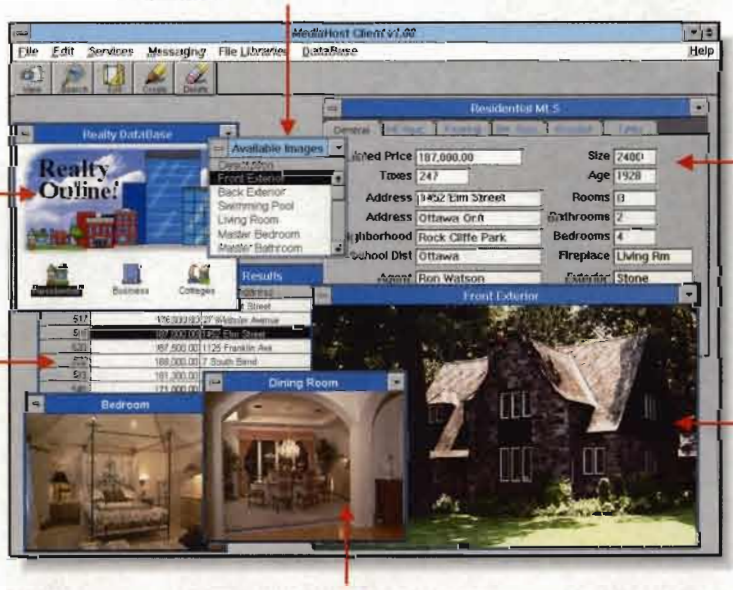

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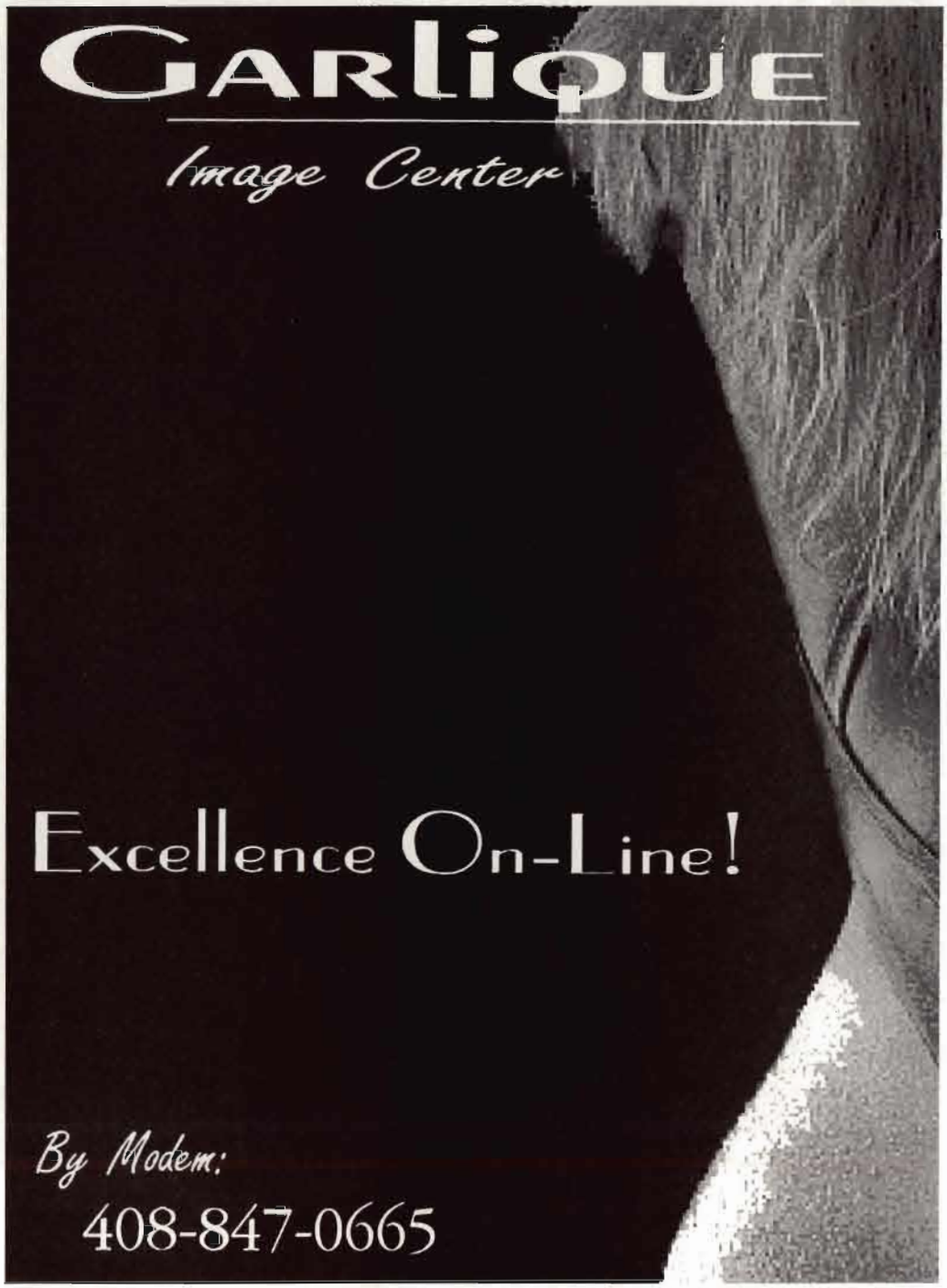

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BY JACQUELINE KRAMER

Online Services Via Cable

Performance at a price

Net surfers and online service customers share a need for speed that seems almost insatiable. The cable industry thinks it may have the remedy: cable modems and lines, which can provide access to the Internet, America Online (AOL), CompuServe (CIS), and Prodigy at speeds up to 50 times faster than telephone lines.

Don't throw away your telephone-based modem just yet, however. Only a handful of cable companies are conducting online service trials in the U.S. at the moment, restricting the high-speed access to a few hundred customers (and, in many cases, cable/online access employees). Cable-based delivery services are now, or soon will be, available in Philadelphia (Comcast Cable), Massachusetts (Continental Cablevision), and San Diego (Cox Cable Communications).

These and other cable companies are studying the trials to determine the viability and potential profitability of cable-based online services, with an eye to rolling out this type of access nationwide within the next five to 10 years. The primary benefit of this kind of high-speed access is obvious — cable offers faster access and download times, therefore reducing the user's billable online time. Additionally, faster cable speeds provide a better platform for advanced online services, such as full-motion video.

Everyone that has accessed Prodigy via Comcast Cable's lines has stated that "they never want to go back," said Comcast's Mark Coblitz, vice president of strategic planning. Coblitz noted that during cable vs. telephone modem tests those using the cable network for access were well into their Prodigy sessions before the telephone modems could finish dialing. Additionally, the cable modem was able to download more than one dozen GIF-format images in the time it took the telephone modem to download just one image of the same size.

Comcast officials plan to offer more than just Prodigy service to their customers, however. Beginning later this year, Comcast Cable will begin rolling out "Comcast PC Connect" nationwide to its customers. The service will initially be offered to approximately 300 customers in the Philadelphia suburbs. (Comcast is headquartered in Philadelphia.) The service will also be available in Baltimore, MD; West Palm Beach, FL; and southeastern Michigan before the end of 1995. Comcast plans to eventually extend the service to all of its 3.3 million subscribers nationwide.

Comcast PC Connect service, which will offer access to AOL, Prodigy, the Internet, and local information resources, will be available to Comcast Cable customers only. It will be delivered concurrently with Comcast's cable service via the company's cable lines. Each subscriber's home will be equipped with a splitter that will route the video signals to the television and PC data to the customer's computer. Additionally, subscribers will be equipped with an Intel/Hybrid Networks modem capable of receiving and sending information via cable lines.

Comcast estimates that early customers can expect speeds of about 10 megabits per second from the server to the home computer, and up to 128 kilobits per second for information being sent from the PC to the server. (The Intel/Hybrid cable modems are 50 times faster than the best telephone modems now on the market.) Future releases of the modem will offer even faster access.

Although Comcast's project has received more press than other projects, it is by no means the first cable entrant in the online service market. Continental Cablevision of Boston, along with partner Performance Systems International, introduced the first cable (Internet) access service, dubbed PSICable, in March 1994. (The service is now available in Cambridge, MA, and the surrounding areas.)

PSICable users are equipped with Zenith's HomeWorks cable television modem, which can reach speeds between 50 and 200 times faster than 9600 bps and 2400 bps telephone modems. However, the service's price could prove prohibitive to the average user; PSICable's rates begin at $125 per month for single user access, and can reach up to $2,750 per month for large business customers.

Cox Cable Communications is also utilizing the HomeWorks modem, this time to deliver the Prodigy service to a handful of customers in San Diego on a trial basis. Participants are now able to access Prodigy at speeds of up to 100,000 bps. Cox Cable plans to begin charging participants for the service early this year. The company will offer several different pricing plans to help determine what customers are willing to pay for cable access to Prodigy. Cable delivery of Prodigy will eventually be offered on a for-fee basis to all Cox Cable Communications customers. However, the company has not established a time table for the roll-out.

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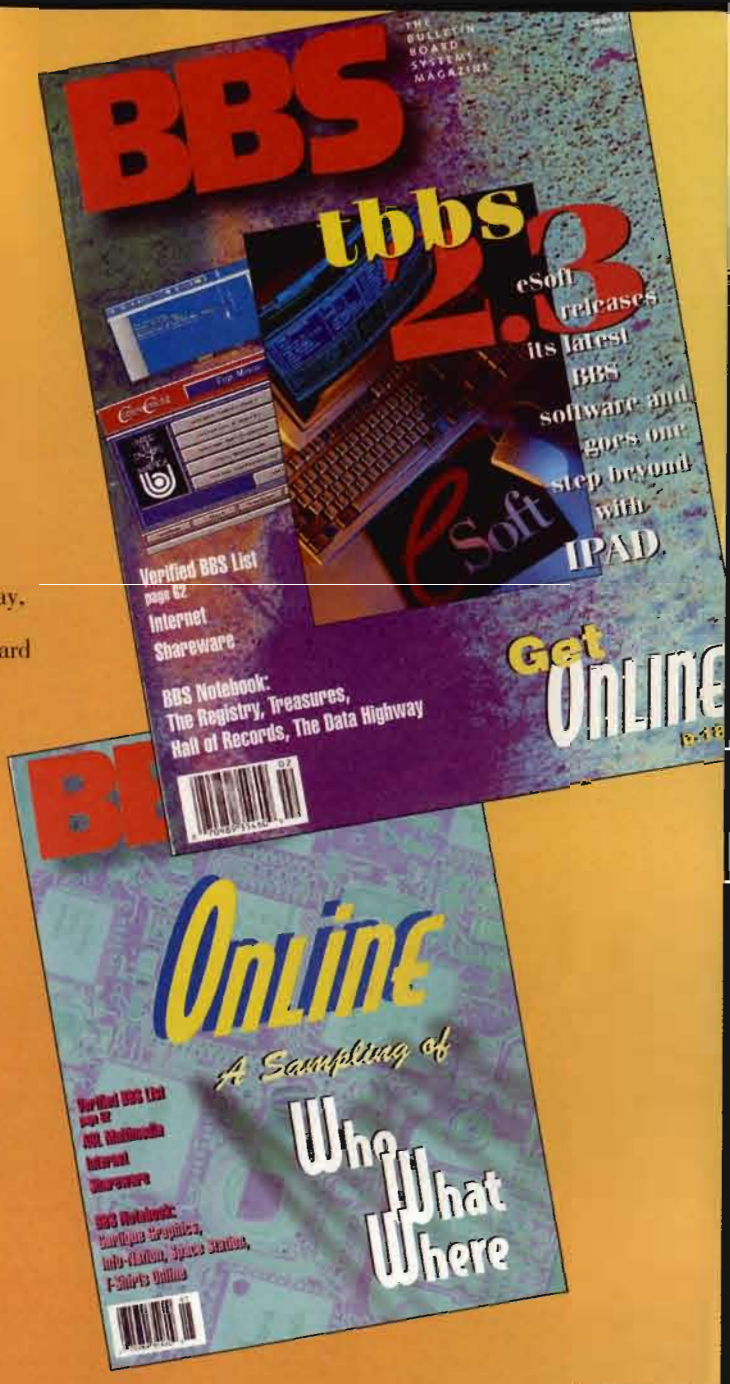

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Internet Roadside Attractions: Sites, sounds and scenes along the information superhighway

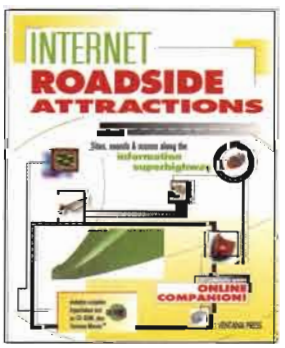
500 pages, CD-ROM, $29.95

Internet Roadside Attractions: Sites sounds and scenes along the information superhighway (Ventana Press) begs the question, "Just how far can a metaphor be taken?" Pretty far, it seems.

But once you get beyond the title — and you should — you'll find a sort of picture dictionary of the Internet, organized by topic and indexed by Internet client.

The "attractions" are chosen by your guides, seven veteran Net surfers, writers and developers — Gareth Branwyn, Luke Duncan, Sean Carlton, Tom Lichty, Donald Rose, Shannon R. Turlington, and Jan Weingarten — who each provide a photo and bio so you can choose your favorites.

The book itself is a good reference. Over 500 resources are listed, including games, Web sites, gophers, chat areas, newsgroups, and WAIS databases. And each site comes with anecdotal references from the contributor.



It's more fun to use than many of the book-form references we've seen, and it comes packaged with a CD-ROM containing Ventana Mosaic (the Web browser developed for Ventana by Spyglass, Inc.) and a searchable full text of the book, including hyperlinks to online content — a nifty bonus.

Get the book for quick help cruising the Net. Or just continue thumbing a ride off the slow-poke search engines.

Net Money

by Kelly Maloni, Ben Greenman and Kristin Miller
288 pages, $19 (US)

Rolling right along, Michael Wolff & Company and Random House Electronic Publishing have released *Net Money*, another in the successful series of handbooks based on last year's picture-filled and info-packed *Net Guide*.

Net Money (authored by Kelly Maloni, Ben Greenman and Kristin Miller) uses the same formula as the others with an alphabetical structure separated into logical chapters like Shopping, Investment, Business and Careers.

The book promises readers will learn how to file taxes online, find a job using a virtual resume, and get thousands of bucks of news and data for free.

It doesn't lie.

There are nine entries for resume and resume writing alone. Taxes: A couple dozen.

Seems everything related to Money that can be found on the Net and commercial services is indexed, listed, categorized and described here. *Net Money* also explains, in writing that's simple but not condescending, how to find all of it. And BBSs get a fair shake, too, with many of the biggies expounding their virtues (or having them expounded).

Net Money is further rounded out with appendices listing sites the authors have deemed the "sleaziest" and a couple under the heading, "Calling these sites boring is an insult to boring people." Beyond that there's a register of business BBSs, software support sites, and contact information for Internet providers.

But with things changing so quickly on the boards, Net and Web, there's an inherent problem with using a paper-published book as a guide — time. Turnaround in publishing these days is still long enough that entries may no longer exist when the hard copy actually reaches readers' hands. However, a random test of *Net Money* found entries current.

Modem Love: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Sex on the Information Highway

by Rexxxxxx
215 pages, $12

Less a guide to the what and where of cybersex than a chance to become a voyeur to others' encounters, *Modem Love* (Kensington Books) serves up hot chat for readers to learn by example.

Author Rexxxxxx takes us along on his trips to the "verbal" brothels of America Online where we sit in on 10 explicit erotic encounters: "I withdraw and slowly place my **** in your *******" is a typical example.

The transcripts may be instructional to those who simply don't know the etiquette of "modem love," but they can get a bit tiresome, too, as readers are not actually privy to the episodes in real time — just the history.

And *Modem Love* teases readers with talk of the Internet, but really only delivers on the ins and outs of AOL.

If you're looking for titillation, call your favorite adult BBS and, uh, just do what comes naturally.

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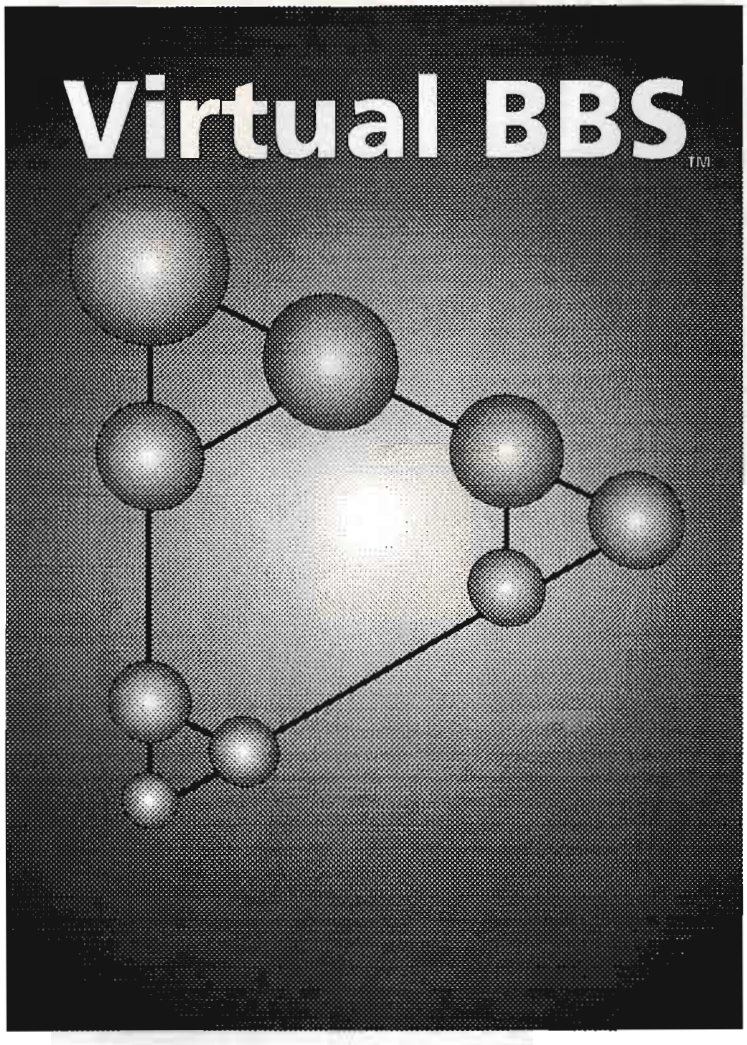

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PCBoard v15.21

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